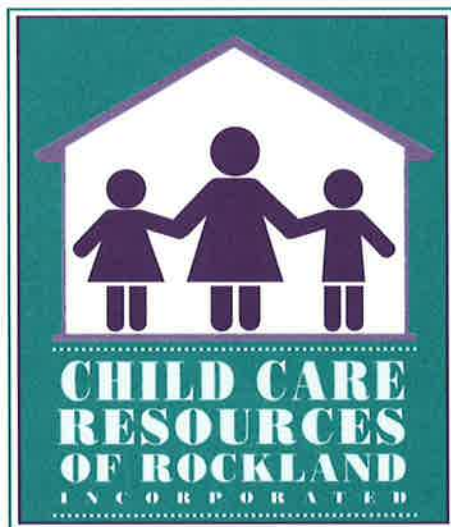


Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc.

Supply and Demand Report with Gap Analysis

2015



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Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc. is a contract agency of the County of Rockland, the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, NYS Education Department, NYS Department of Health and the United Way of Rockland County. Additional funding for Special Needs Services is provided by Family Support Services, Mental Health Services and the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities. CCRR is supported by Rockland Community College.

Background

Rockland County, New York is located approximately 25 miles north of New York City. The 2010-2014 American Community Survey indicates an estimated total population of 318,186 with 23,845 children under 5 years old, 25,324 children 5-9 years old and 24,109 children 10-14 years old. There has been an overall population growth of 9.1% of children under age 18 in Rockland County since the 2000 Census. This growth has been concentrated in the Town of Ramapo (encompassing East Ramapo and Ramapo Central School Districts), which has seen a 25.7% growth of population in children under 12 years of age since 2000. Current estimates indicate over 70,000 children potentially needing some type of child care in the county based on age of the population. Projections indicate a 14.7% population growth by 2040 in the county.

CCRR serves just under 4,000 families per year, making it apparent that we are not reaching out fully to the service delivery area and that a large percentage of families are not accessing our services. This could also mean that many children are in non-regulated, possibly unsafe child care situations. CCRR should increase visibility and marketing efforts in general with an emphasis on educating the community about our services. Strategies could include meeting with school district Parent Teacher Associations, meeting with employees of local corporations and smaller businesses and increasing attendance at visibility events.

CCRR works collaboratively with several community organizations in order to reach underserved populations. CCRR implements a project with the Ramapo Central School District through Title 1 funding that provides preschool children in families with low income with an early childhood experience. Children in this program are learning English as a second language. They are also eligible for additional services, provided by a CCRR staff member, such as translation for the child, teacher and family as well as educationally related support services. In addition, CCRR administers the Universal Prekindergarten Program for seven of the eight school districts in the county and the Statewide Full-day PreKindergarten Program for the four school districts that received that full day funding.

The current Hispanic population of the county is at 15.7% which is up from 10.2% according to the 2000 Census Data. However, the Hispanic population of children under age 18 has increased 64.3% since 2000. Even more pronounced is the 106% increase of the Hispanic population in the East Ramapo School District. Spanish is the second most commonly spoken language in the service delivery area. Eight CCRR staff are bilingual in Spanish and English. One CCRR Board member is bilingual in Spanish and English. Other languages spoken by staff and/or board members are Yiddish, French, Creole, Egyptian, and German. There are approximately 147 different languages spoken in Rockland County.

Due to the overall size of Rockland County, the density of the population and the way that the boundaries of school districts often cut across several town borders, Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc. reports supply and demand information based on school district. School districts in Rockland County have uniquely distinct demographic characteristics, particularly in income and cultural and linguistic diversity. The East Ramapo School District is considered one of the "High Need" districts by the New York State Education Department. CCRR gathers information during referral calls to document accurately the demand for child care in the service delivery area. The majority of searches conducted for families are based on a child's school district, rather than the town in which they live (area). This allows families to plan child care around immediately available transportation provided by the school district for a school age child and to plan for future child care transportation needs when searching for care for a younger child. This report was created using data compiled from the NACCRRAware database during the time frame January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. During this time frame there were 970 Active Clients with 76% of them conducting a child care search based on their school district. There are eight school districts in Rockland County.

Type of Care:

During the reporting period, Rockland County had approximately 274 child care providers registered or licensed through the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS). These providers are reflected in the following modalities:

- Family Child Care= 56
- Group Family Child Care=118
- School Age Program= 34
- Child Care Center= 66

This report contains data related to these licensed or registered programs only.

Additional programs listed in the NACCRRAware Database include:

- *Universal Pre-K*: State funded school readiness program for 4 year olds. Program can be located in a public school or a community based organization such as a nursery school or licensed Child Care Center or home.
- *Pre-K/Preschool*: School readiness program for 3-5 year olds
- *Nursery School*: Care typically provided for children 3-5 years old for less than 3 hours per day in a facility that may or may not be regulated by NYS OCFS. Nursery schools may be voluntarily registered by the New York State Education Department.
- *Playgroup*: A parent/guardian attended activity program. Playgroups are not regulated.
- *Kindergarten*: A program/facility for 5 year olds that meets the New York State Education Departments Learning Standards.
- *Head Start*: A federally funded program that offers comprehensive services to children of low-income from 3-5 years.
- *Early Head Start*: A federally funded program that offers comprehensive services for children of low-income from birth to 3 years old.
- *Inclusive/ Special Education*: A regulated/licensed care program provided to children (usually between the ages of 36 months to 5 years) with special educational needs. These programs are also known as 4410 programs.
- *Vacation/Holiday*: A program that operates for a short duration of time such as during a school vacation. Vacation/Holiday programs may be exempt from NYS OCFS regulation. This does not apply to summer months.
- *Camp or Summer Recreation*: A program or specialized summer program that operates during the summer months only. A summer recreation program may or may not be licensed or registered by the NYS OCFS or be Department of Health regulated.
- *Special Interest*: A program such as a computer camp or special type of recreation program that is not necessarily licensed or registered by NYS OCFS or other state regulatory agencies.

Programs may be documented under multiple designations as appropriate to their services, funding and licensing or regulatory status. For example, a Universal Pre-K Program may also be a licensed Child Care Center.

During the reporting period, the following opening and closing of licensed/regulated child care programs were documented:

Program Modality	Opened	Closed
FCC	4	5
GFCC	11	7
SAC	0	1
DCC	7	3
Total	22	16

Part Time and Full Time vacancies by school district are illustrated in the graphs below. It is clear that many more Full Time vacancies are available compared to Part Time vacancies. The majority of Part Time vacancies are available for preschool and school aged children. Providers often do not wish to accept children for care as part time enrollment (decreased tuition rate) as this increases their ratio for part of the day or week only, thereby preventing them from accepting a child for Full Time care (full tuition rate). Providers are reluctant to add Part Time care to their profile but often indicate to Family Connections Specialists during updates that they would consider and discuss Part Time enrollment with parents on a case by case basis. Family Connections Specialists include this as part of their conversation with parents during referrals.

The tables below provide detailed information about part time and full time child care vacancy and capacity data by school district and type of child care requests by parents by age within each school district.

**Charts for Part Time and Full Time Child Care Vacancy by Age by District
January 1, 2015-December 31, 2015**

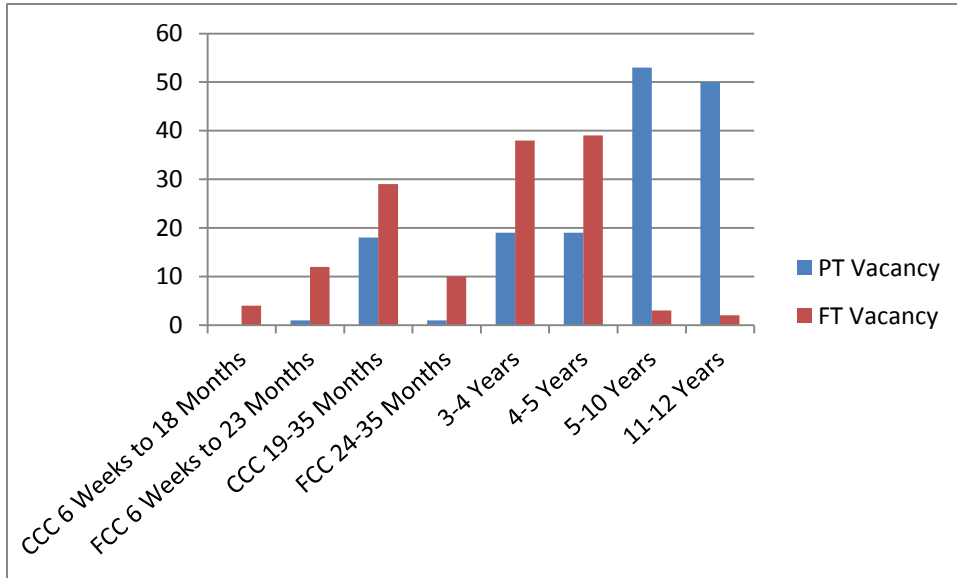
Source: NACCRRAware

CCC=Child Care Center
FCC=Family Child Care

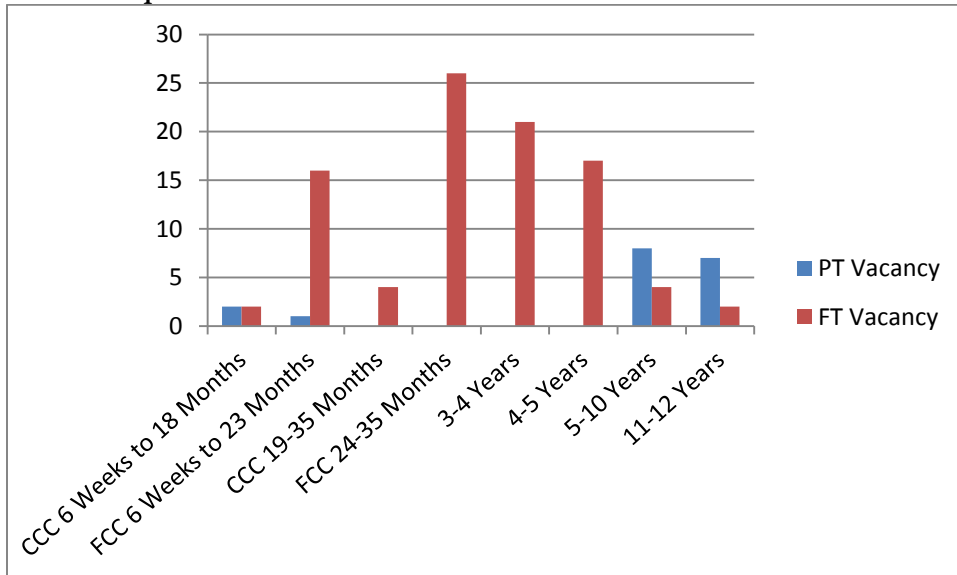
PT=Part Time
FT=Full Time

* Vacancy data for School Age Care and Group Family Child Care is not available in NACCRRAware.

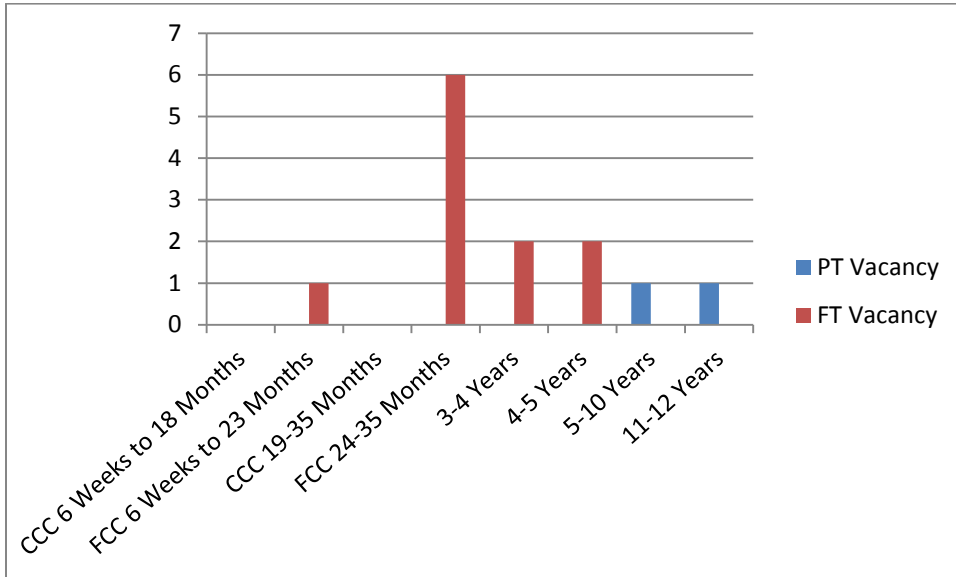
Clarkstown School District



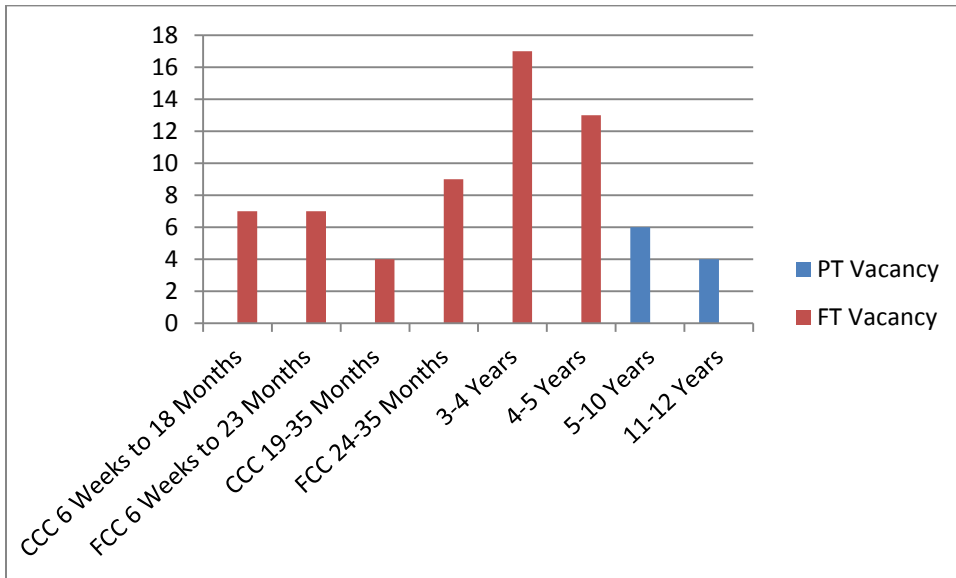
East Ramapo School District



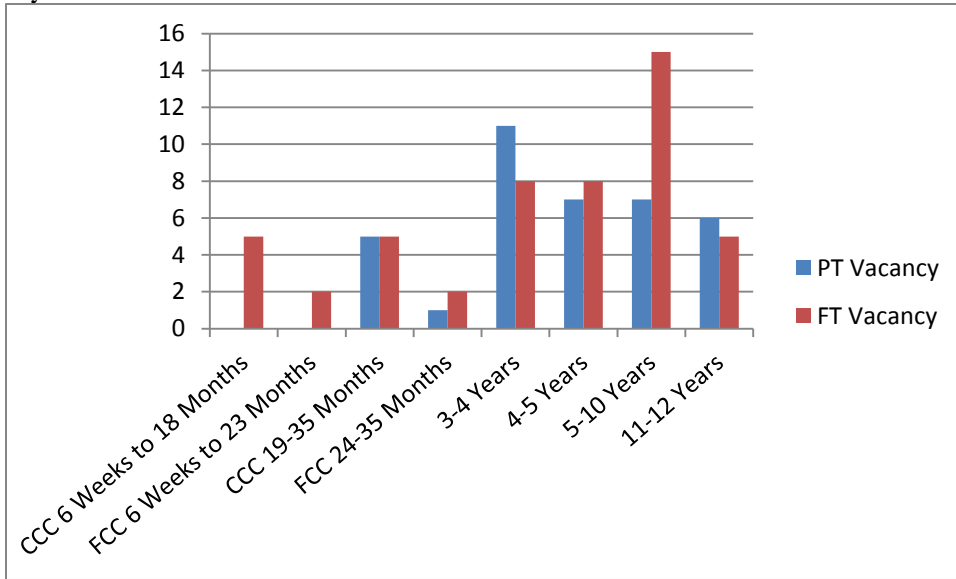
Nanuet School District



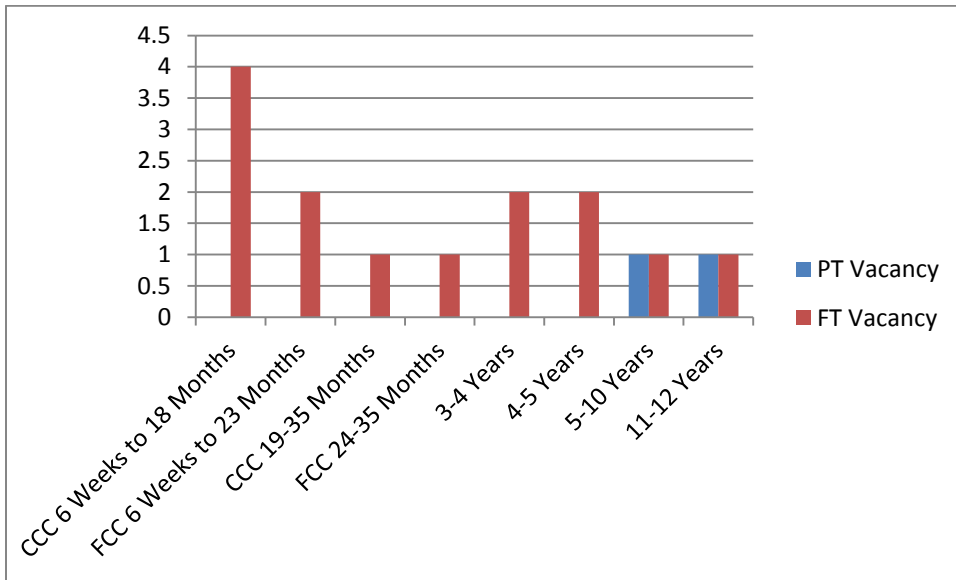
North Rockland School District



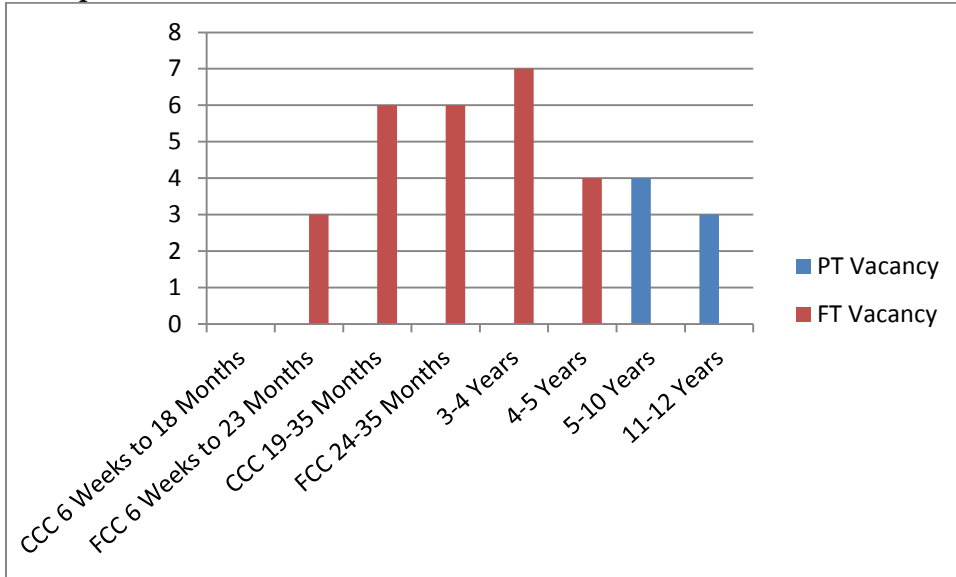
Nyack School District



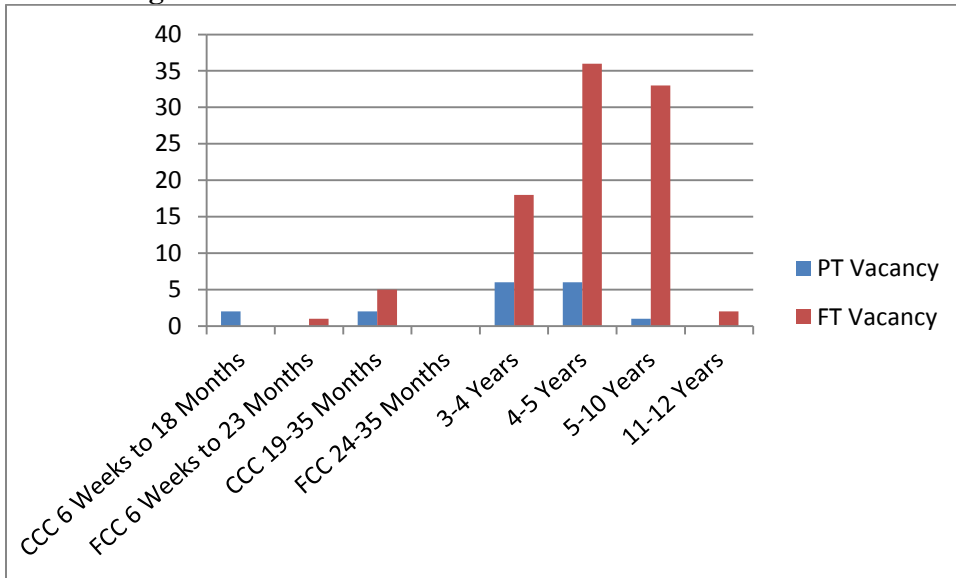
Pearl River School District



Ramapo Central School District



South Orangetown School District



The following charts illustrate the total number of slots available within each modality of child care program within each school district as well as the Licensed and Desired Capacity of each. Total vacancies are also listed for reference.

Group Family Care (GFCC)

District	Count	Licensed Capacity	Desired Capacity	Total Vacancies
Clarkstown	18	280	246	99
East Ramapo	55	862	744	342
Nanuet	5	80	72	14
North Rockland	14	222	214	99
Nyack	5	70	68	31
Pearl River	5	78	71	12
Ramapo	8	128	88	59
South Orangetown	7	112	108	45

Family Child Care (FCC)

District	Count	Licensed Capacity	Desired Capacity	Total Vacancies
Clarkstown	7	56	55	33
East Ramapo	17	136	110	54
Nanuet	0	0	0	0
North Rockland	11	86	85	49
Nyack	2	16	16	9
Pearl River	4	31	23	11
Ramapo	6	48	48	37
South Orangetown	0	0	0	0

Child Care Center (CCC)

District	Count	Licensed Capacity	Desired Capacity	Total Vacancies
Clarkstown	10	969	827	146
East Ramapo	21	1543	1291	243
Nanuet	1	16	16	0
North Rockland	10	805	805	44
Nyack	8	591	591	93
Pearl River	4	456	453	12
Ramapo	6	599	570	52
South Orangetown	5	393	294	33

School Age Care (SAC)

District	Count	Licensed Capacity	Desired Capacity	Total Vacancies
Clarkstown	10	800	750	287
East Ramapo	2	167	145	31
Nanuet	2	270	270	245
North Rockland	6	270	230	130
Nyack	4	237	75	22
Pearl River	1	80	80	0
Ramapo	5	280	230	50
South Orangetown	2	230	140	0

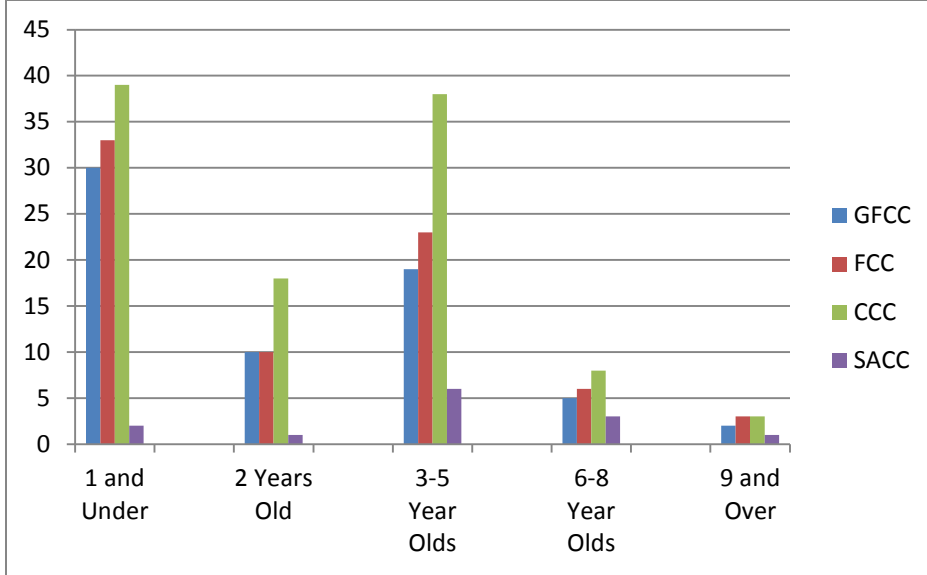
CCRR maintains collaborative relationships with all eight school districts in the county in order to assist them in identifying and reaching underserved populations. CCRR is contracted by seven of the eight local school districts to coordinate, administer and oversee their UPK Program. These districts include: Clarkstown, Nanuet, North Rockland, Nyack, Pearl River, Ramapo and South Orangetown. This state funded program provides free half-day PreK to a total of 767 four year old children living within the boundaries of participating school districts. In the Spring of 2014 funding became available from the New York State Education Department for school districts to apply for Statewide Full-day Prekindergarten. CCRR applied on behalf of 4 school districts, Nyack, South Orangetown, North Rockland and Ramapo Central. All of the applying districts were awarded their original grant request and continued to receive the grant through the 2015-2016 school year thereby expanding PreK to serve 75 additional children in the full day program. All of the PreK services are provided by Community Based Organizations such as child care centers, nursery schools or child care homes.

Each participating community based early childhood program that provides Pre-K services is required to meet the regulatory guidelines provided by the New York State Department of Education. CCRR oversees these programs to ensure adherence to these guidelines. Quality Enhancement Specialists work with the sites on a monthly basis to provide guidance, technical assistance and support. During the reporting period, 36 early childhood programs provided UPK services to 767 children in seven school districts. Nine sites provided Statewide Full-day PreK services to 75 children.

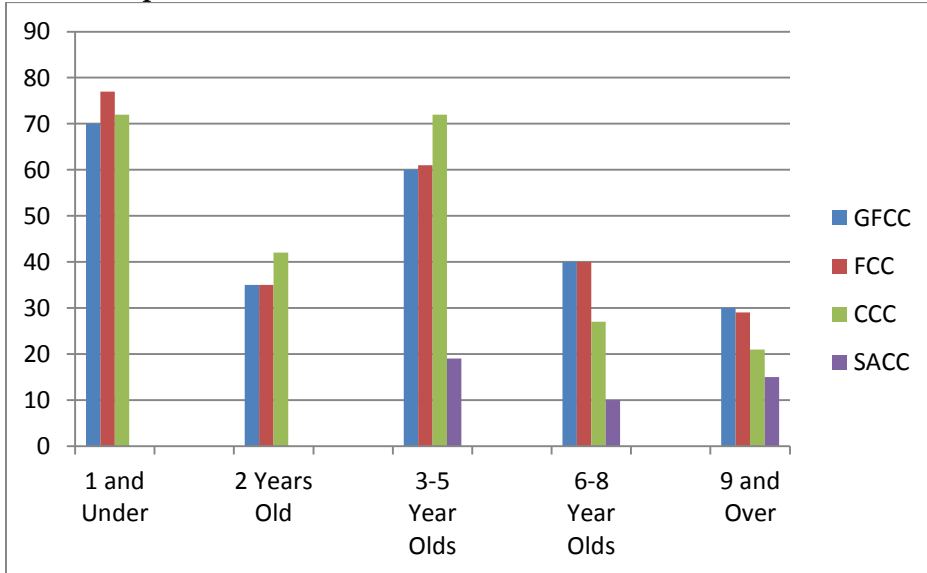
An additional 1,600 children living within the East Ramapo School District benefited from a UPK program. The East Ramapo School District oversees its own UPK program.

Requests for Child Care by Age, Modality and School District
January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015
 Source: NACCRRAware

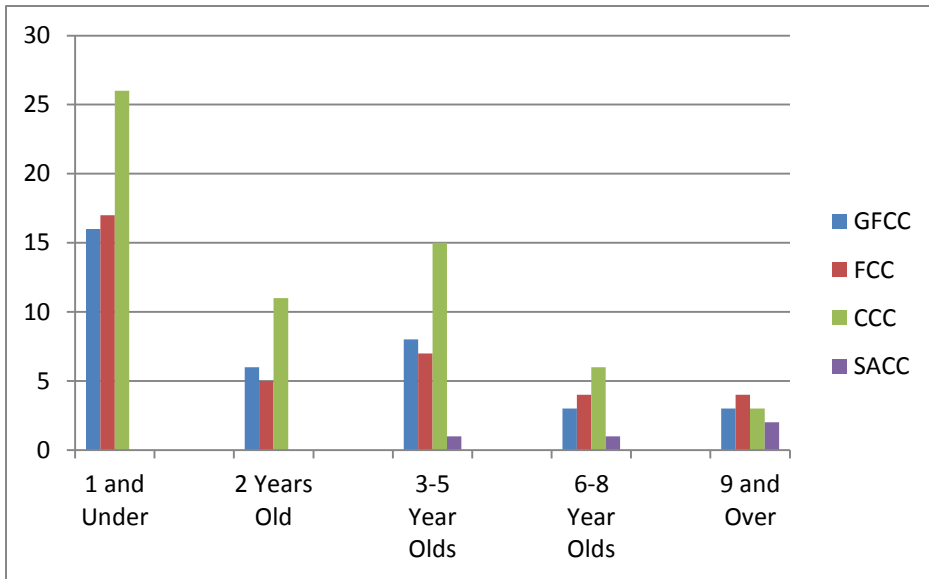
Clarkstown



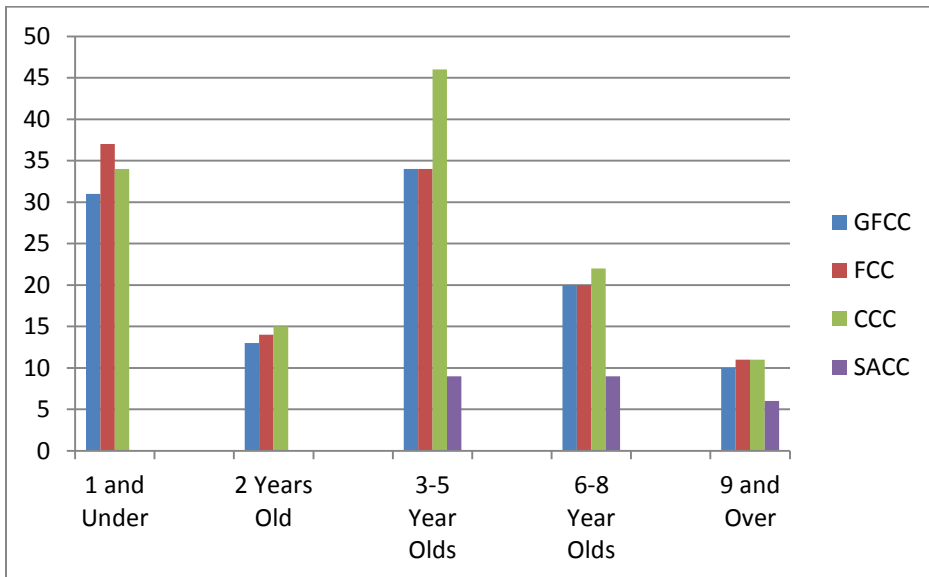
East Ramapo



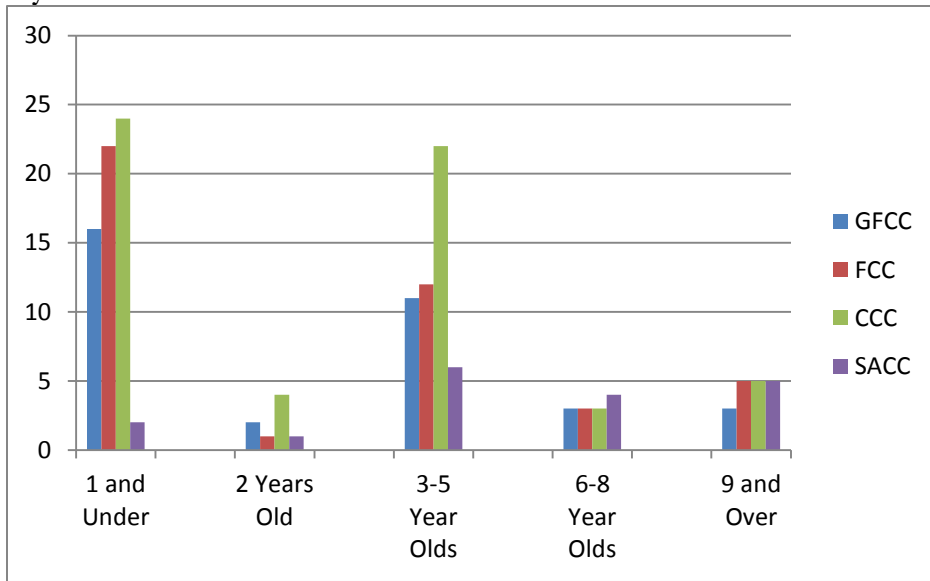
Nanuet



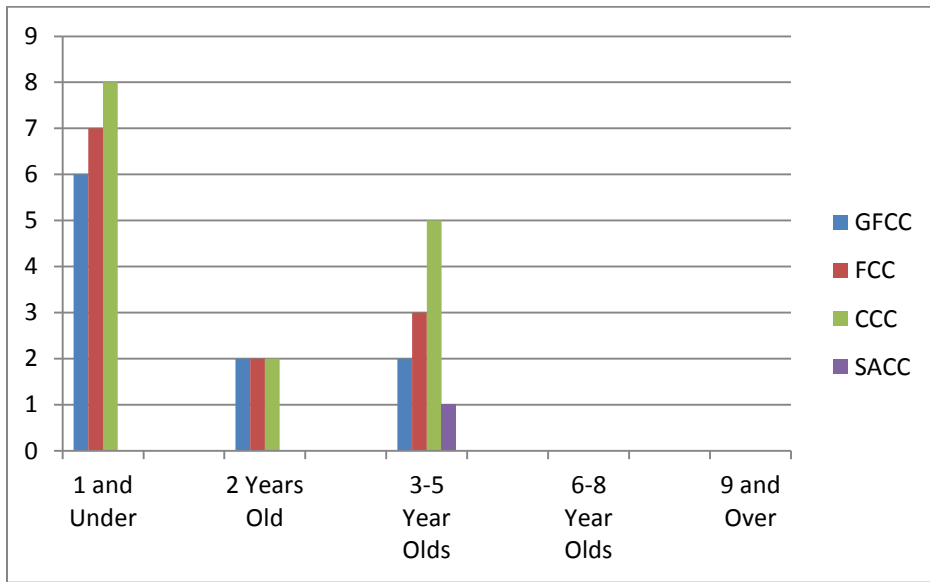
North Rockland



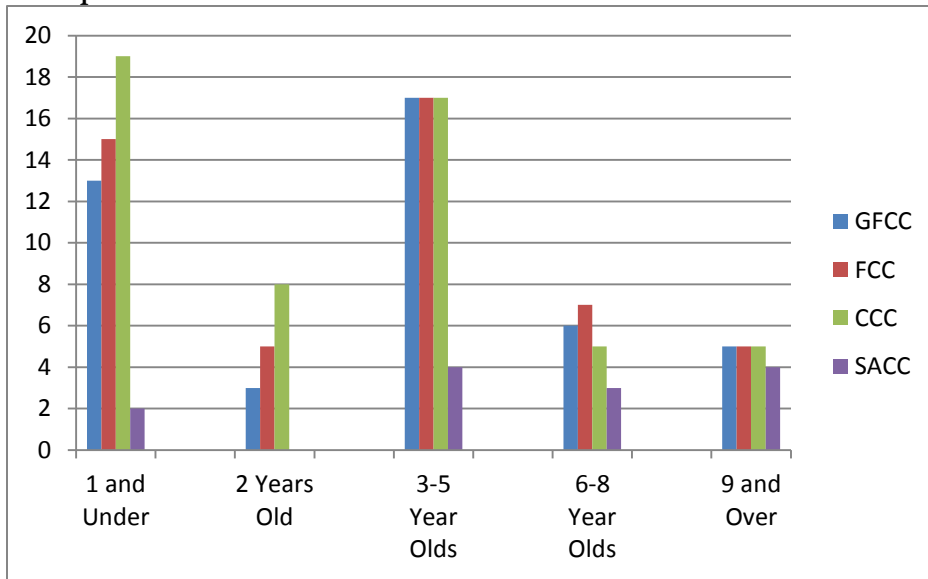
Nyack



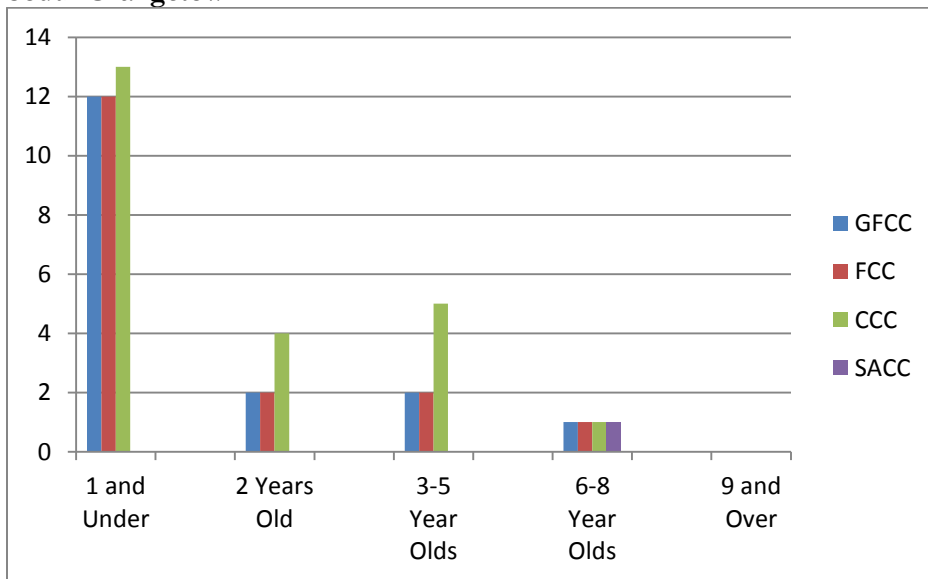
Pearl River



Ramapo



South Orangetown



Family Child Care:

Few vacancies (less than 20 per district) are available in Family Child Care programs in Nanuet, Nyack, Pearl River. Nanuet has 0 vacancies in FCC compared with 15 requests. Nyack has 9 vacancies compared with 56 requests. Pearl River has 11 vacancies compared with 15 requests. There are no FCC programs in the South Orangetown School District area which may explain the inflated number of requests in Nyack, a neighboring district. Family Connections Specialists can educate families about the options available to parents who are seeking a more intimate child care experience for their child which may help families become more aware of the benefits of a Group Family Child Care program (e.g., additional staffing).

Group Family Child Care:

The supply and demand gap in GFCC varies significantly by district. Clarkstown had 65 requests compared to 99 vacancies indicating ample supply. East Ramapo had the highest number of requests at 235, yet they had 342 vacancies reported, indicating ample supply. Nanuet had 33 requests compared to 14 vacancies, indicating a shortage of supply in the area. Pearl River had 12 requests compared to 8 vacancies, indicating a shortage of supply in the area. North Rockland had 107 requests compared to 99 vacancies, indicating a shortage in the area. Nyack had 35 requests and 31 vacancies, indicating a small discrepancy between supply and demand. Ramapo had 44 requests with 59 vacancies, indicating ample supply. South Orangetown had 17 requests and 45 vacancies, indicating ample supply.

School Age Care:

Records in the NACCRRAware database indicate **School Age Care** requests are minimal. Three districts, East Ramapo, Pearl River and South Orangetown had fewer vacancies than requests for care. This data may not reflect a true demand for school age care because the majority of families requiring school age care tend to be on a wait list through the various SAC programs run at buildings in the school districts; therefore they may not seek our services for referral. School Age Care vacancy data is difficult to maintain efficiently due to the cyclical nature of the program. Updates to School Age Care Programs should occur on their own schedule, such as shortly after the beginning of the school year, in order to capture the true vacancy data. We reach out to families who are on a wait list for school age care at a site in a school building. That way we can inform them of our services and educate them about other child care options such as FCC and GFCC programs.

Child Care Center:

CCC requests collectively represent the highest number of requests during the reporting period by a modest amount. Nanuet, North Rockland and Nyack are the three school districts that show the most significant gap in availability. The only existing CCC in Nanuet opened during 2011 and serves preschoolers exclusively. It is a unique program in that it is located in the district's only elementary school. However, this leaves Nanuet with no infant slots in a Child Care Center. Requests for a child care center in North Rockland are nearly triple the slots available. Requests for a child care center in Nyack are nearly double the slots available. Increasing infant slots in a center based program should be part of ongoing provider expansion efforts in 2016.

Specific programs may indicate a "Desired Capacity" number lower than their license permits due to a variety of factors such as lack of appropriate staffing available. Updating provider information is primarily an outreach effort. Very few providers initiate an update on a regular basis. Family Connections Specialists work with providers during updates and as referrals are generated in order to clarify a provider's desired capacity and vacancy data, as this number may change circumstantially. The vacancy totals generated by the NACCRRAware database are reflective of the information collected during annual updates. Child care programs may have lower or higher vacancies than reflected here because they do not immediately report every newly enrolled or newly discontinued child in their program. Based on the fluidity of vacancy data, parents are educated about questioning a provider on actual availability of care during the initial inquiry.

Child care searches are conducted by modality. Often, parents will search for multiple modalities of care because they have not yet decided which type of care is the best option for their child. During the referral process, Family Connections Specialists encourage parents to visit different types of child care programs so that they may directly observe the unique qualities of each type of setting. This tendency for families to search by multiple modalities can create an inflated amount of requests for care. For example, parents who are considering a home-like setting often search for FCC and GFCC in the same search due to the fact that both modalities offer a home-like setting.

Analysis of this data indicates areas of need to be age and location specific. Provider expansion efforts are based on specific needs within distinct areas, such as school districts.

Methods used to conduct provider updates include:

- Annual phone updates initiated and conducted by the Family Connections Coordinator
- Periodic, as needed, updates conducted by Family Connections Staff and the Family Connections Coordinator in order to expedite referrals accurately
- Provider update forms sent to providers via email (Provider Questionnaire)
- Provider update forms given to participants at initial Health and Safety training for FCC and GFCC providers
- Bi-annual joint department meetings between the Family Connections Specialists and Program Standards and Supports Specialists
- Other opportunities for provider enrollment updates are during welcome visits by Standards and Support Specialists, CACFP visits and technical assistance visits

Children's Age Groups

As illustrated in the graphs beginning on page three, it is evident that there are very few slots available for young infants in Rockland County as a whole and in Nanuet particularly. Nanuet has only one Child Care Center which serves preschoolers only. This has been problematic for families as many providers request their desired age range to be even higher than their license permits (they may be licensed for infants but prefer to take toddlers and preschoolers only). Family Connections Staff discuss this with providers on an individual and as needed basis as referrals require. Families are often referred to bordering school districts to seek infant care. Other solutions include searching for care near a parent's place of employment

Days and Times Available

All registered/licensed providers offer traditional hours of care 5 days per week. Family Connections Staff communicate to child care providers during database profile updates the changing needs of Rockland County families for non-traditional child care hours. Possibly due to these discussions, the overall number of child care providers offering services during these non-traditional hours has increased. Throughout the county, approximately 47 home based providers offer care during evenings (a slight increase), 17 overnight (a slight increase) and 37 weekends (an increase of 27%). This time frame of care is known as "non-traditional hours". According to the New York State CCR&R Network NACCRRAware Provider Configuration, the following shift definitions are accepted:

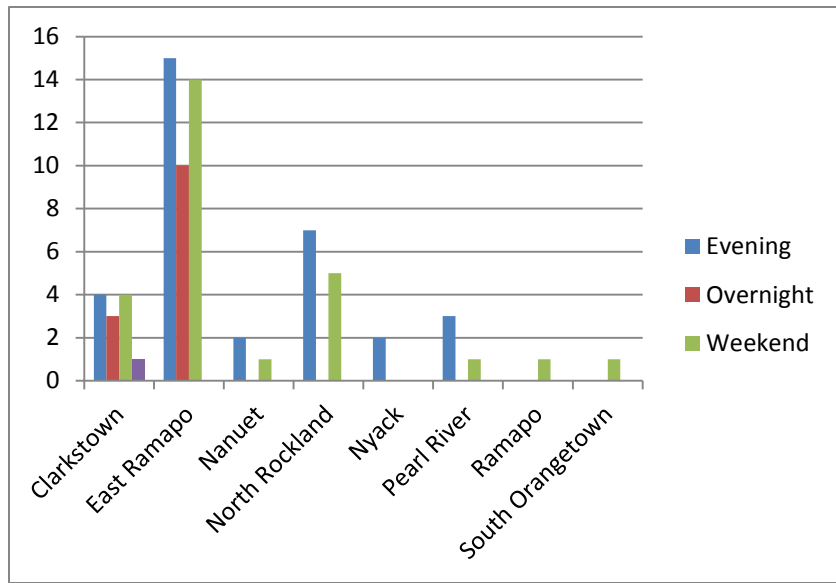
- Evening-a shift beginning approximately 6pm and ending at or before 11pm
- Overnight-a shift beginning after 7pm and ending approximately 7am
- Weekend-locally defined as Saturday and Sunday care

As illustrated in the charts below, all districts except Ramapo and South Orangetown contain providers that have indicated in their NACCRRAware profile that they offer evening or overnight care. Fewer than five providers do so in the Nanuet, Nyack, Pearl River, school districts. No centers offer care during non-traditional hours or on holidays. Although many home based providers do not wish to include evening, overnight and weekend care as part of their official profile, they often indicate to Family Connections Specialists during updates that they would consider providing such care on an as needed basis and would discuss it with families individually as the need arises. Additional information is documented in the "Comments" area during updates and is illustrated in the "Non-Traditional Days and Times of Care" chart below. Family Connections Specialists do not often conduct a search using these non-traditional hours as a parameter because it would exclude too many possible providers. Therefore, Family Connections Specialists educate parents on how to discuss their needs with a provider during an initial inquiry.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the Family Connections Specialists to communicate the needs of families seeking child care, a considerable gap remains in supply and demand for care during weekend hours. Overall, during the reporting period, there were 41% more requests for care than child care providers available during weekend hours. Requests for child care during evening and overnight hours and child care providers offering evening and overnight child care are comparable.

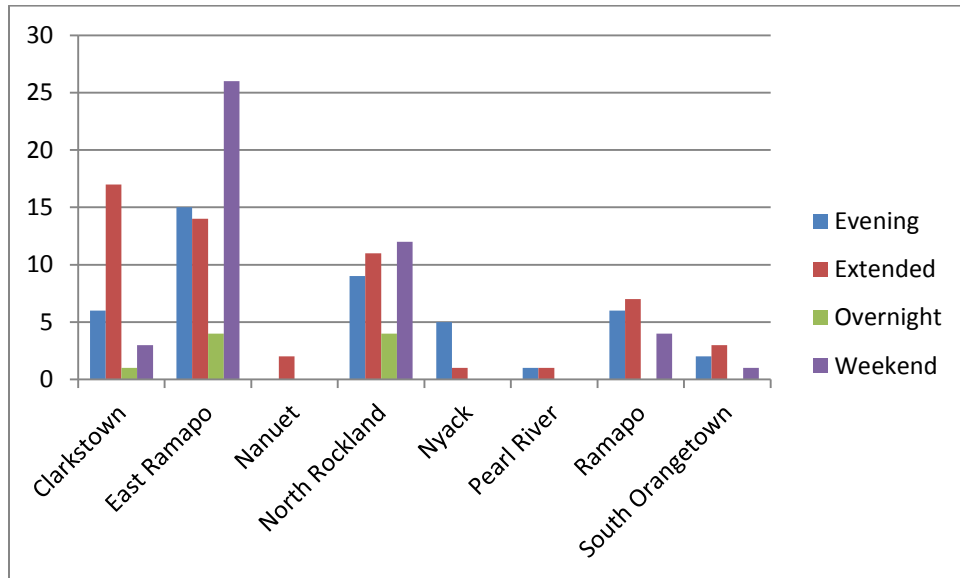
Non-Traditional Days and Times of Care Available from Licensed Child Care Providers by District

Source: NACCRRAware



Non-Traditional Requests for Care from Parents by District

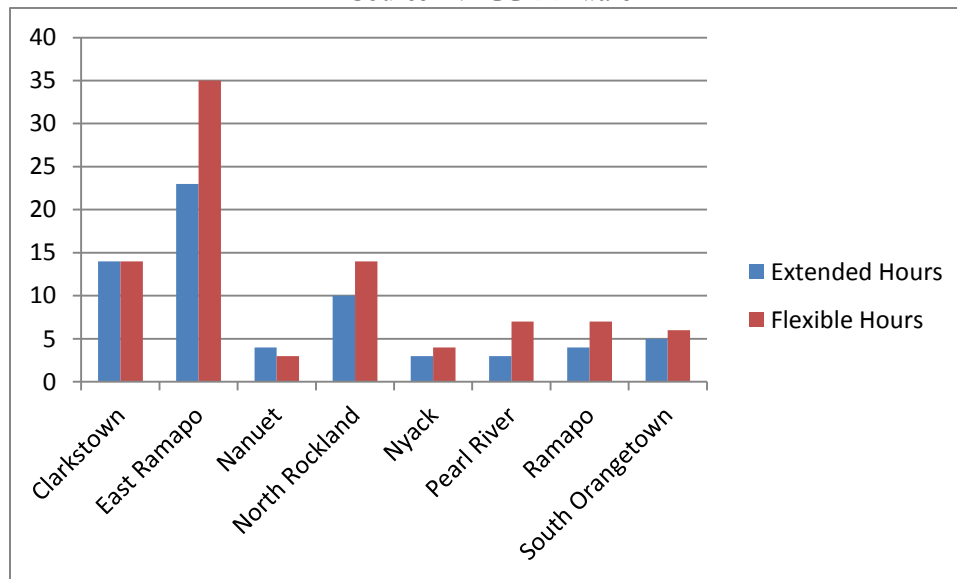
Source: NACCRRAware



The majority of providers in all districts are generally available to care for children as early as 7:00 am and as late as 6:00 pm. Sixteen providers open at 6:00 am (compared to 31 in the last reporting period) and another 28 providers open at 6:30 am (3 less than the prior reporting period). Thirty-three providers are open until 6:30pm (a decrease of 28% since prior reporting period). During database profile updates, the Family Connections Coordinator discusses trends in parent requests for care with the child care provider and explains that by remaining open 1-2 additional hours, they may be able to increase their enrollment. Eighteen child care providers are available for care until or past 7:00 pm (a decrease of 28%). The percentage of providers across the county offering extended hours is relatively low (38%). This is problematic for families who work non-traditional hours or who commute a long distance. Family Connections Specialists work with families using creative problem solving in these unique situations. Family Connections Specialists also discuss flexibility in hours of care available with providers when updating or on an as needed basis during referrals. Providers are encouraged to offer extended hours when possible. Providers currently offering these features are indicated in the chart below. This information is captured in the Additional Care Services Field.

Providers Offering Extended and Flexible Hours by District

Source: NACCRRAware



Quality of Care

There is a modified quality rating system in place in New York State at this time. Thanks to Race to the Top Funds, New York State has worked with early childhood programs in persistently low achieving school districts to help them improve practices using the QUALITYstarsNY standards. However, none of Rockland County schools meet the criteria. New York State held a field test for QUALITYstarsNY in 13 communities with Rockland County being among the 13 communities. As the Lead Agency for Rockland County, Child Care Resources of Rockland then provided the guidance to participating child care programs to successfully complete the initial field test at the end of 2010. CCRR continues to provide intensive technical assistance to 5 programs, including a pre and post-test using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, through our NYS Child Care Resource and Referral contract using our Intensive Technical Assistance funds. The NYS budget for 2016 included an additional \$2 million for funds to expand the work provided by the \$3 million in the 2015 budget. CCRR is eager to implement the QUALITYstarsNY system throughout the county once it is in place. QUALITYstarsNY will offer parents an easy-to-understand rating system using a scale of 1-5 stars. This would help parents choose the right programs for their children by identifying varied levels of quality. Each star will signify higher quality, with the top level equal to rigorous national accreditation.

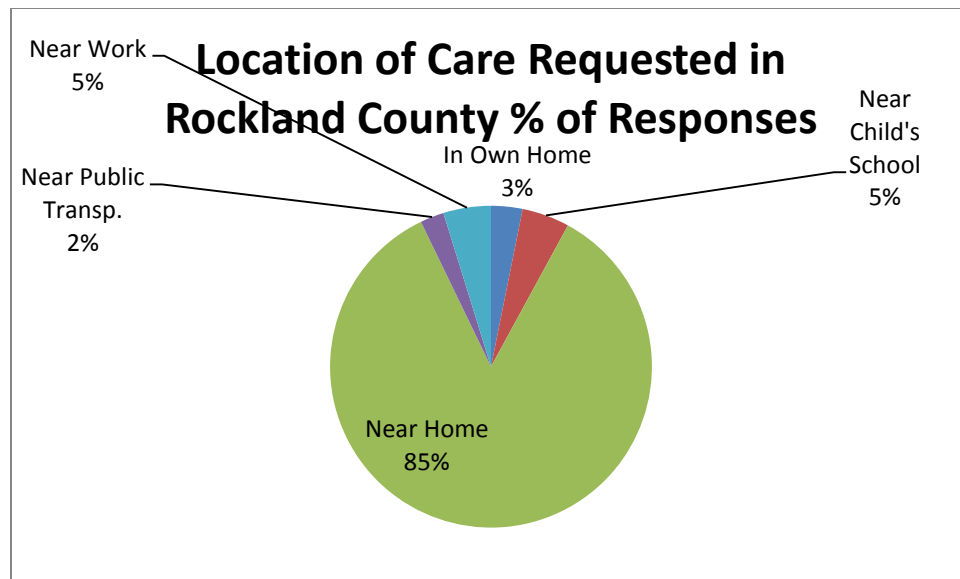
CCRR measures quality of care through consideration of several factors such as level of GFCC/FCC provider education, accreditation, training, caregiving experience, related certifications and credentials. Provider education increased an average of 8% overall from 2014 to 2015. Currently, 229 providers possess a High School Diploma, 92 providers possess an Associate’s Degree, 131 providers possess a Bachelor’s Degree and 97 providers possess a Master’s Degree. Forty-five providers possess a Special Education Degree. Education level is not available for CCC/SAC. Information is self-reported by child care providers. CCRR does not confirm credentials.

Family Connections Specialists discuss quality of care indicators with families during referral calls. Families often choose to search for a child care provider using quality of care indicators such as education level and accreditation. Families are encouraged to discuss other factors with providers directly such as types of training taken, years of experience, turnover rate of staff and educational philosophy.

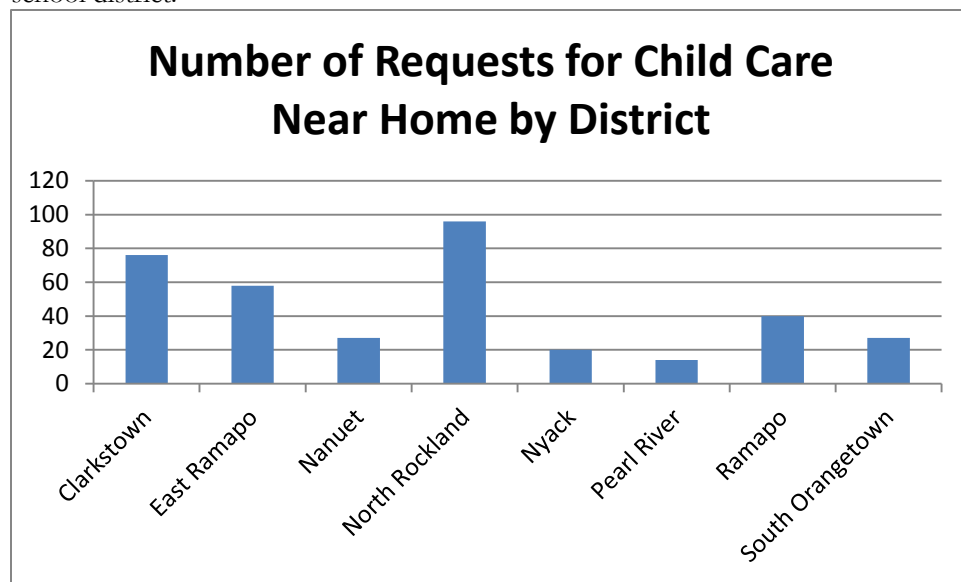
Families are always directed to the OCFS website and given contact information so that they may research the license history of a particular provider before choosing care and while the child is in care.

Location of Care Needed

Families are able to select care near their home or near their workplace. The vast majority of families search for care near their home due to the desire to remain within their school district boundaries. According to data retrieved from NACCRRAware during the reporting period, about 85% of requests for care in Rockland County were made “Near Home”.



The graph below illustrates the number of parent requests for “Location of Care Near Home” within each school district.



Lack of personal transportation and limited availability of public transportation are often a decisive factor when choosing location of care.

CCRR collects school district and school information during a provider update. A search may be conducted using a school age child’s bus route. School districts vary in their policies regarding transportation of school age students within a bus route. No districts will transport a child outside of their district boundaries unless it is for a special education placement.

The Nyack School District contains two of the major employers in the county, a large shopping mall and a hospital. However, the Nyack School District has 19 child care providers at this time. However, only 7 of these are home-based providers, two of which offer evening child care hours and 1 of which offers weekend child care. This is problematic for families working for the Nyack Hospital or the shopping mall because many of the positions available for employment require non-traditional work hours. Efforts to increase the provider base in Nyack include community outreach at libraries and through the district Family Resource Centers. Family Connections Specialists and Standards and Support Specialists discuss with Family Child Care Providers the possibility of expansion to Group Family Care. Family Connections Specialists work with families employed at these locations, who are having difficulty finding a provider in the area, to seek care near their home or in a nearby location.

Nanuet and Pearl River are smaller communities in population yet they share another large employer, a pharmaceutical company. Similar provider expansion efforts are made within these two school districts, specifically Nanuet which lacks a Child Care Center serving infants. In addition, another large retail employer, the Shops at Nanuet, opened during 2014.

Cost of Care

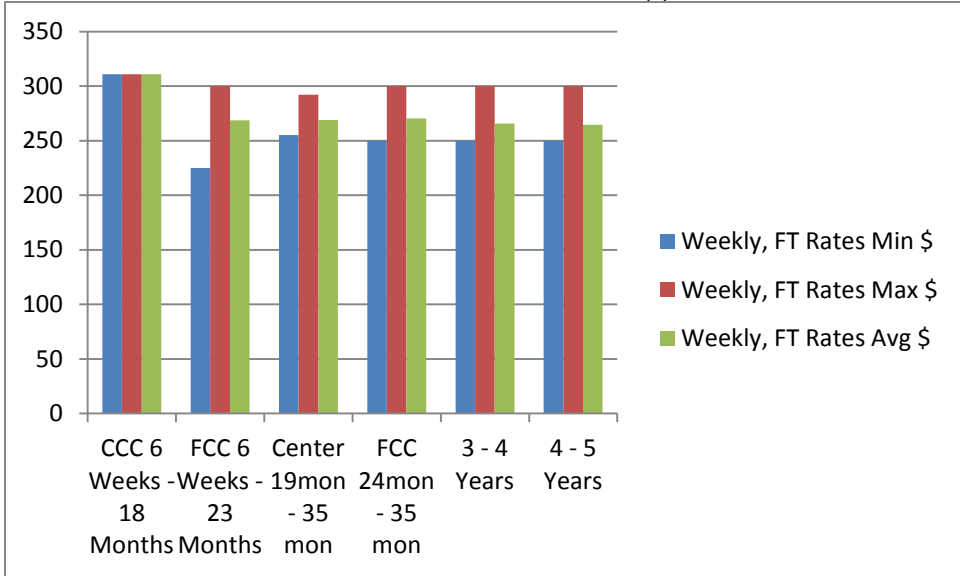
Child care in Rockland County is cost prohibitive. Many families are unable to find affordable, quality child care. Limited availability and cost of public transportation also has an impact on a family's ability to access appropriate care. Rockland County does an excellent job of serving families eligible for child care subsidy. They use all federal, state and county funds for child care assistance.

The following charts illustrate the cost of care by age and modality within each school district.

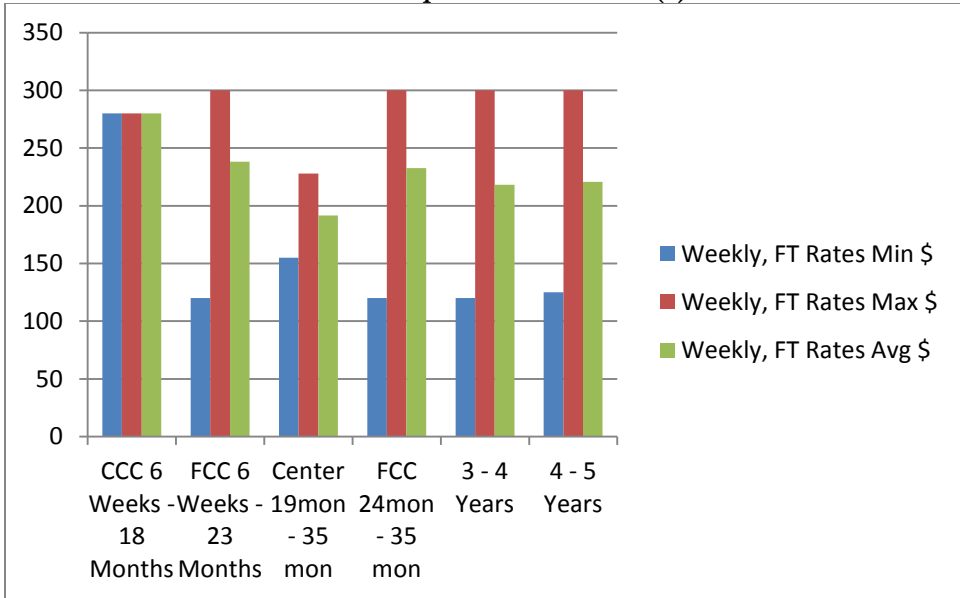
2015 Cost of Care by Age by District
Weekly, Full Time Rates
Source: NACCRRAware

0-5 Year olds

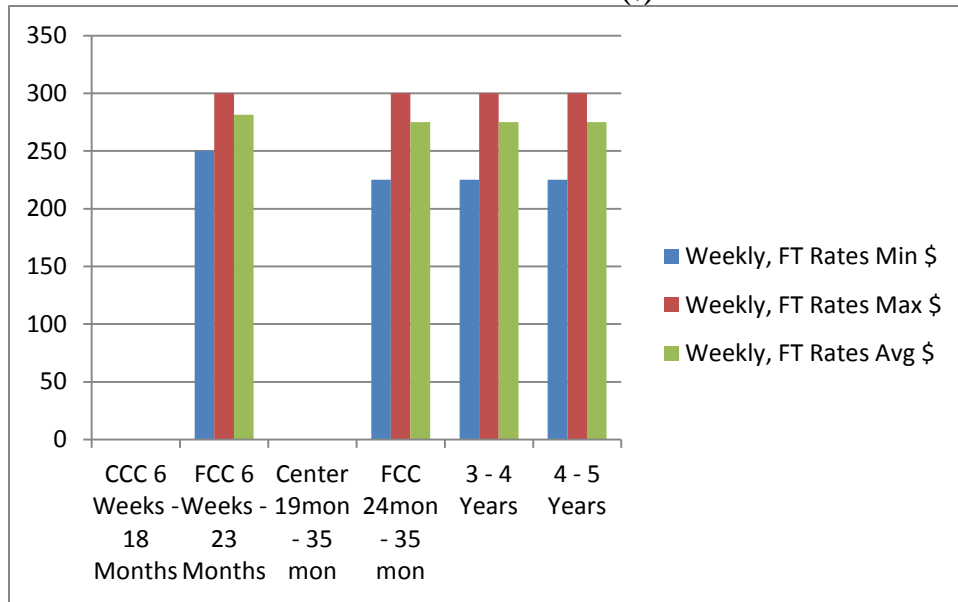
Clarkstown School District (\$)



East Ramapo School District (\$)

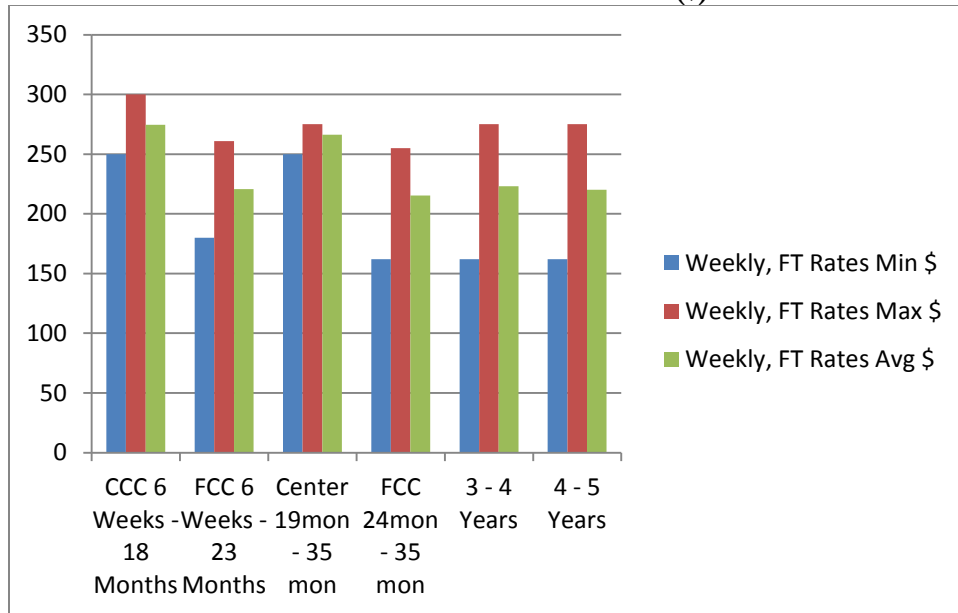


Nanuet School District (\$)

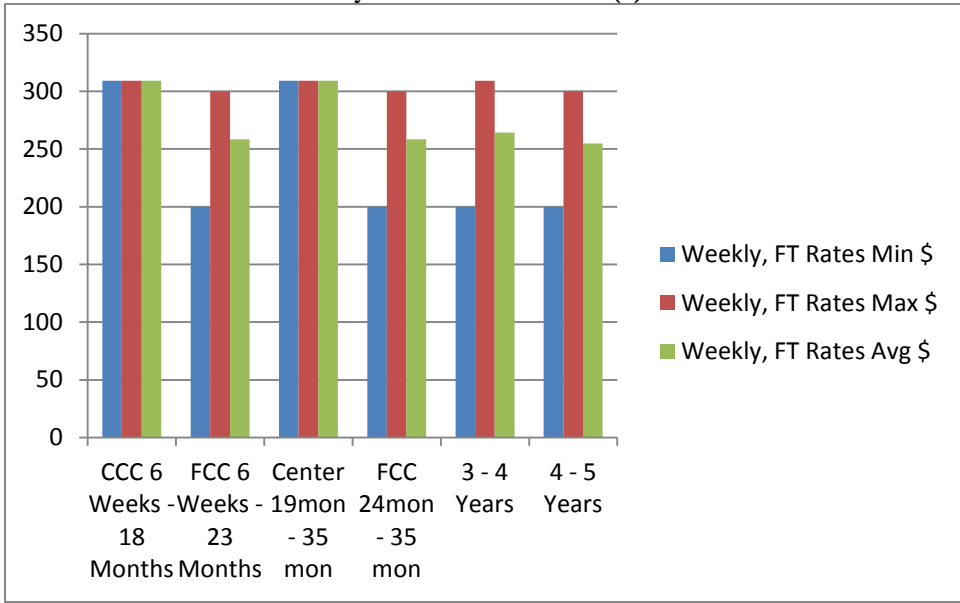


*There are currently no child care centers in the Nanuet School District that serve infants 6 weeks to 35 months. Therefore, no rates are posted.

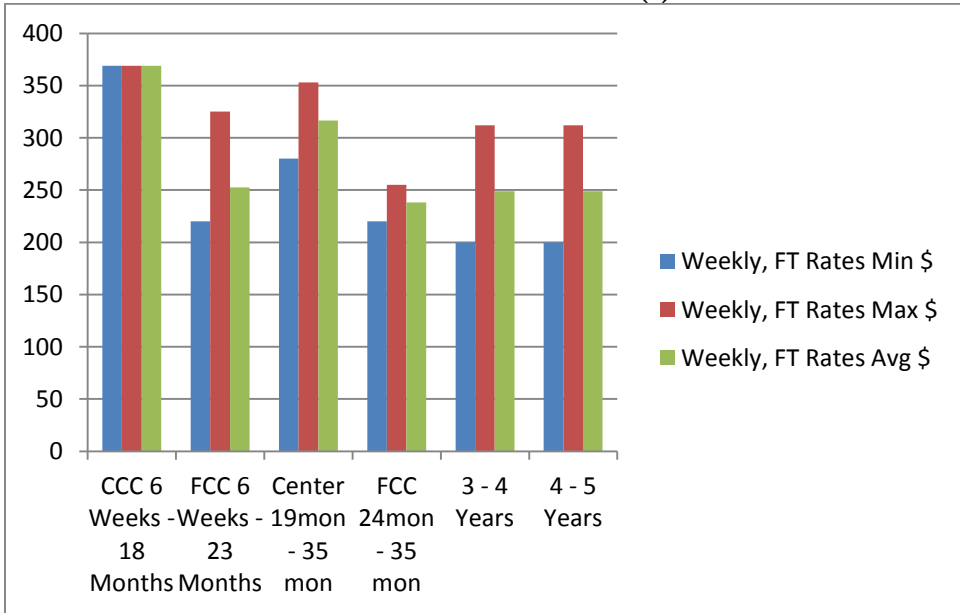
North Rockland School District (\$)



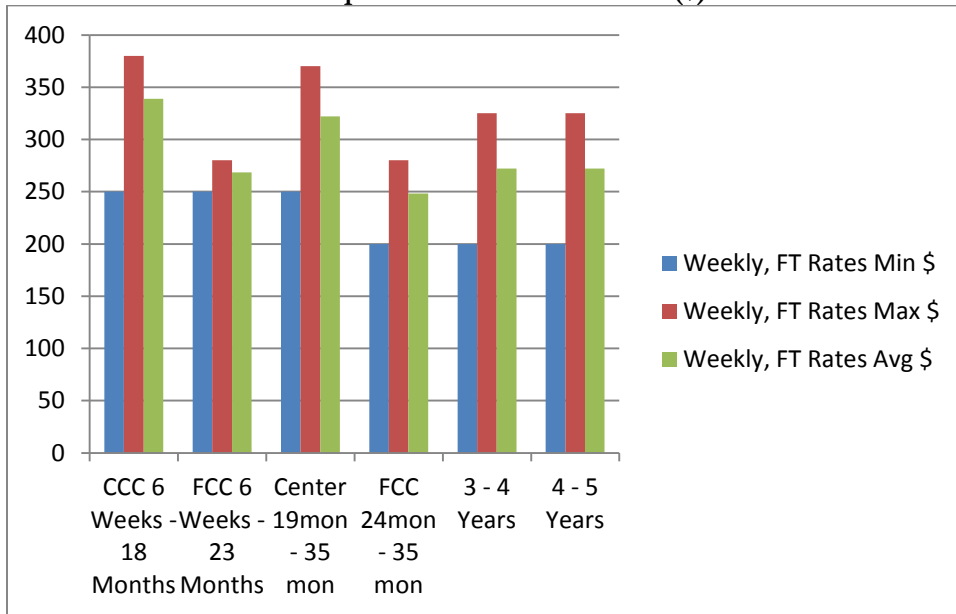
Nyack School District (\$)



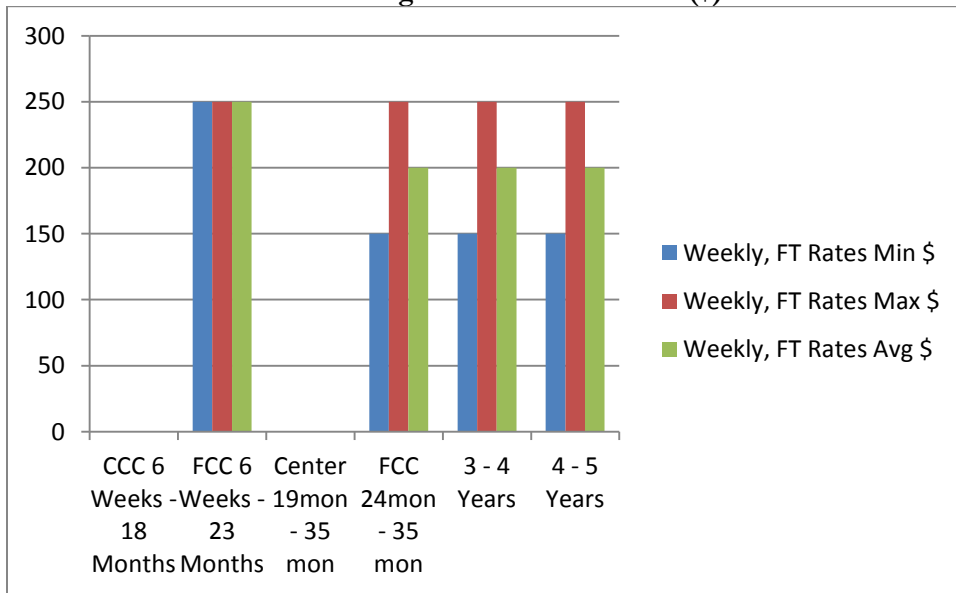
Pearl River School District (\$)



Ramapo Central School District (\$)

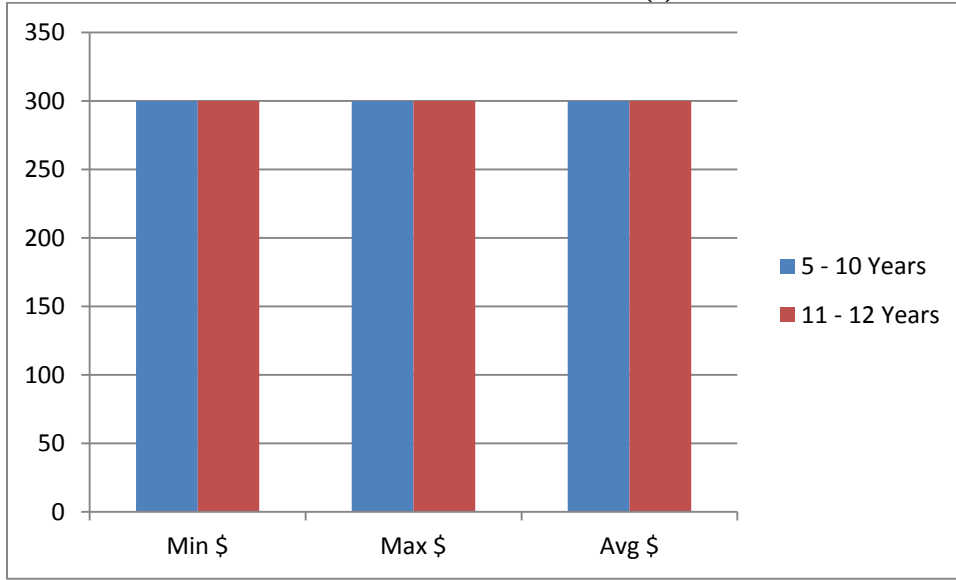


South Orangetown School District (\$)

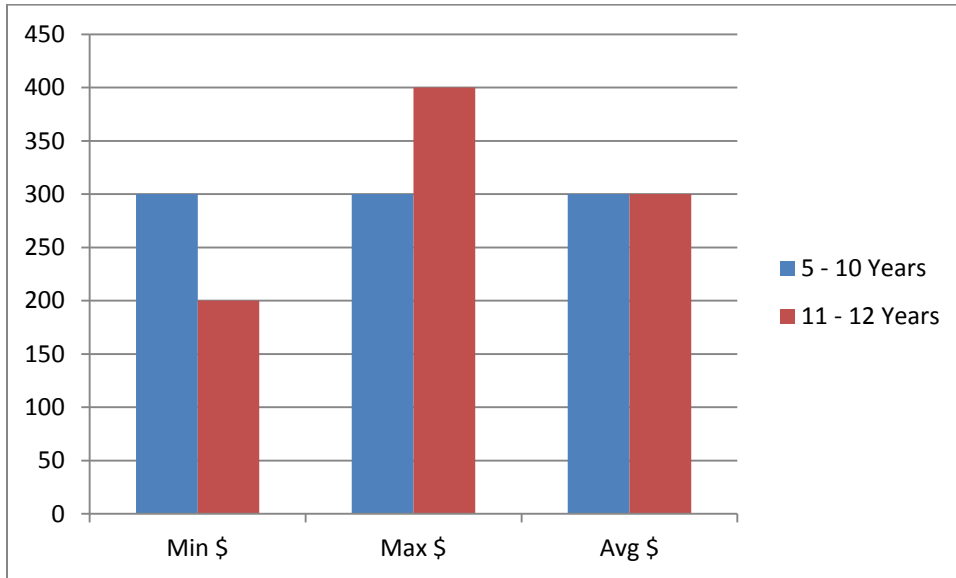


**2015 Cost of Care by Age by District
 Monthly, Part Time Rates
 School Age Care
 Source: NACRRAware**

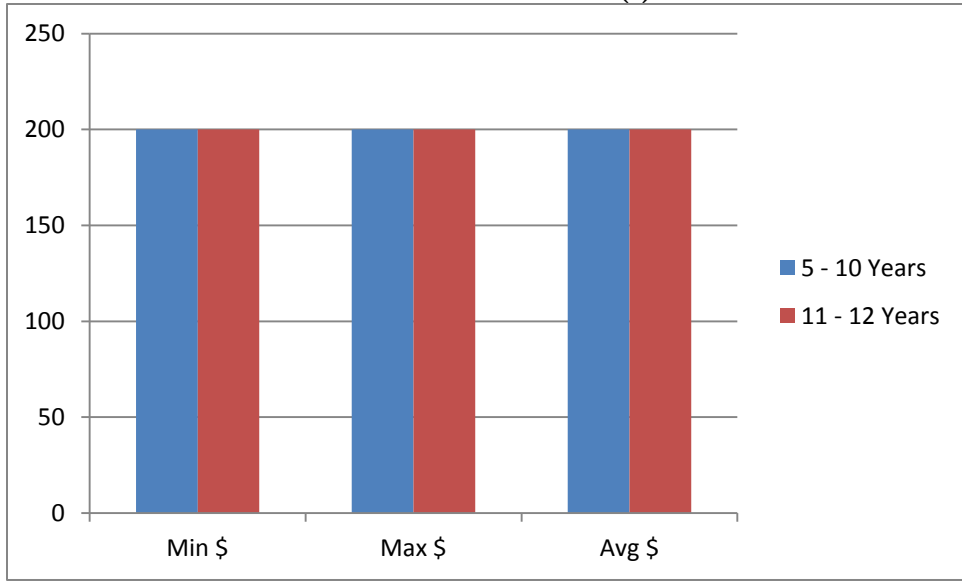
Clarkstown School District (\$)



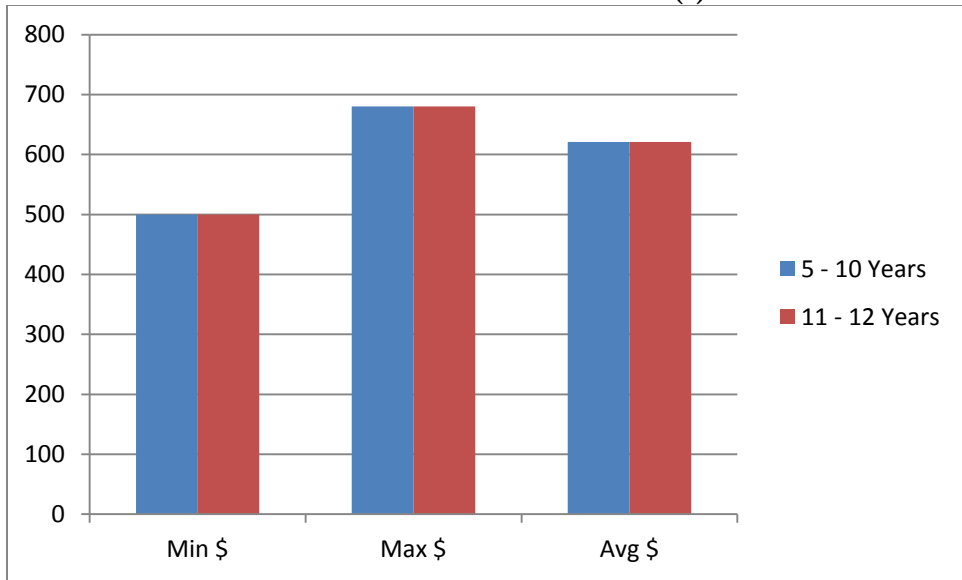
East Ramapo School District (\$)



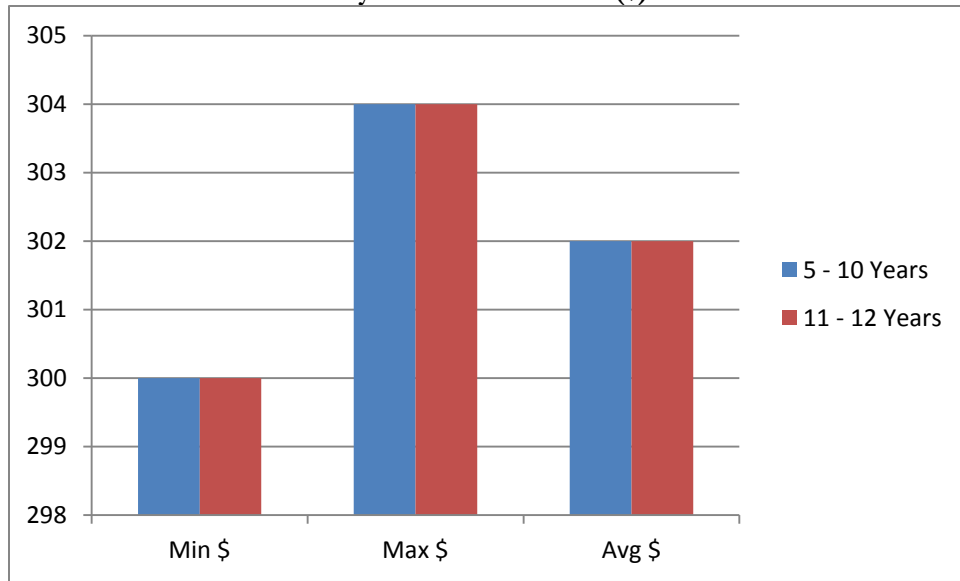
Nanuet School District (\$)



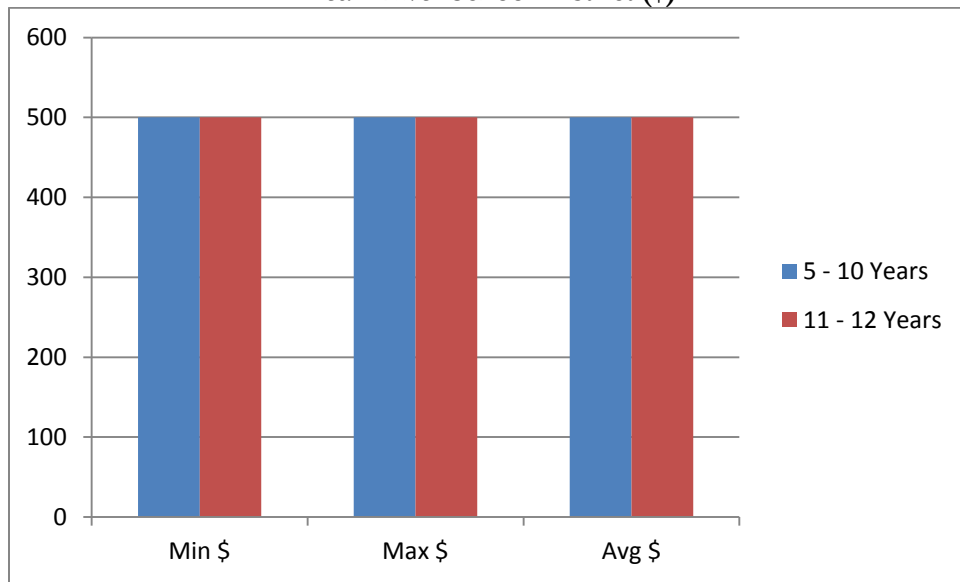
North Rockland School District (\$)



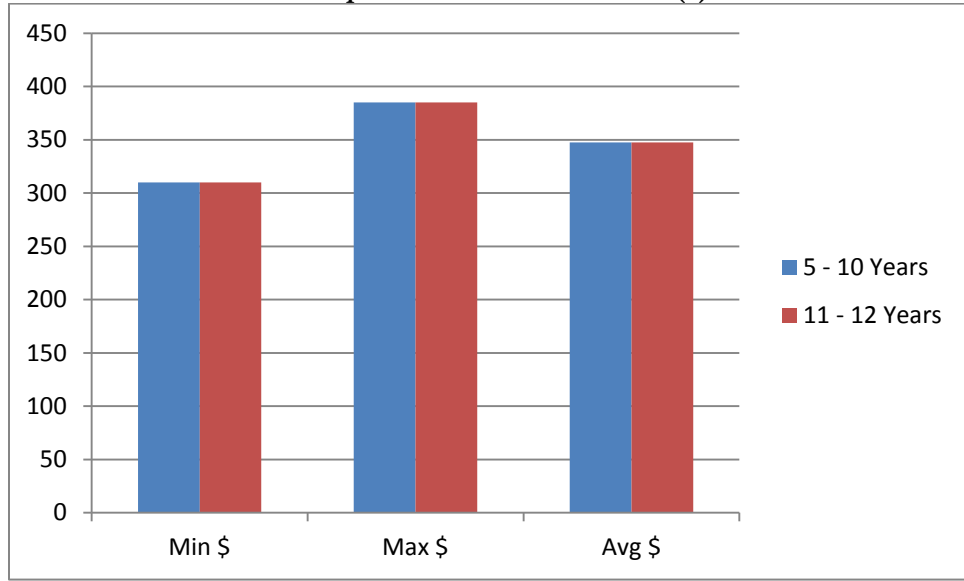
Nyack School District (\$)



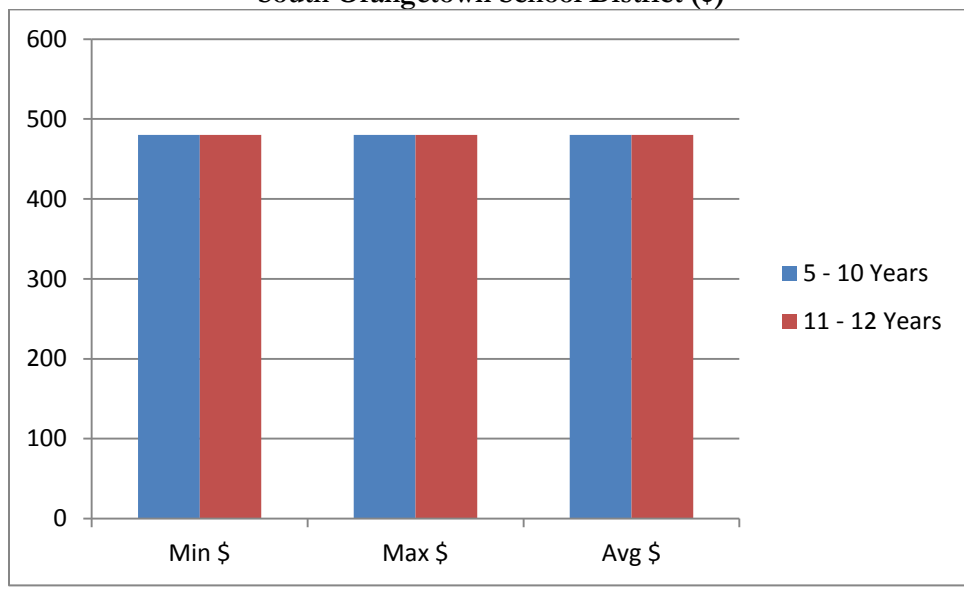
Pearl River School District (\$)



Ramapo Central School District (\$)



South Orangetown School District (\$)



CCRR does not conduct a search for child care by cost. Parents are educated during the referral process about the range of tuition rates for child care based on age of child and type of care requested. Parents are counseled on how to discuss cost of care and payment options with a provider. The script used by the Family Connections Specialists contains information about Earned Income Tax Credit, Subsidy Eligibility, Head Start programs, Universal Prekindergarten, Statewide Full-day Prekindergarten, sliding scale fees, sibling discounts, and The United Way Tuition Scholarship (a grant funded program administered by CCRR).

CCRR administers a grant through the United Way of Rockland County called the Tuition Scholarship. Limited child care tuition scholarships are available to eligible families with funding to cover a portion of a family's child care costs. Fourteen children from 12 families received this funding during the reporting period. Twenty-nine families are on the wait list for this program. This grant was written with the intention of serving families who were not eligible for subsidy but who still fell below 275% of poverty.

Many providers are willing to discuss their rates with a family and prefer this to a posting of their rates on a referral. However, some providers are often unable or unwilling to reduce their rates. Family Connections Specialists discuss rates with providers during updates and at times, during specific conversations initiated by a referral.

Based on the tuition rates reported, in Rockland County as a whole, infant care in a center is by far the most expensive at an average of \$314 per week for full time care. This represents a slight decrease since the 2014 reporting period. Toddler care in a center remains an average of \$282. Preschool care in a center averages \$241, a slight decrease from 2014. School age care averages \$328 per month, representing a significant increase of 17 % since the 2014 reporting period. Care of all ages in a home based setting tends to be about 20-25% less. Nyack, Clarkstown and Ramapo costs of care are relatively higher than in other school districts.

Preferred Options of Parents

Parents have preferences in choosing child care in addition to type of care (modality). Areas where families tend to indicate preferred options are in the environment, indicators reflecting quality of care and of course times/days available. Searching for child care providers using a variety of quality indicators narrows the results significantly. Therefore, Family Connections Specialists find it more effective to educate the parent about quality indicators and model specific questions that the parent can ask the provider when calling to make the appointment to visit. The Family Connections Specialist also explains to the parent how to read and interpret the information on the provider profile once it is received. Doing so, however, prevents CCRR from capturing the quantitative data necessary to provide a true supply and demand comparison in this area. Information is currently collected and documented anecdotally through department meetings, phone logs and comments on a client profile in NACCRRAware. Due to NACCRR Quality Assurance requirements, CCRR is exploring ways in which parents' needs and preferences can be documented in qualitative terms.

One particular area that families indicate as a preference concerns the caregiver's experience with or ability to care for a child with a special need. During the reporting period, 28 families in Rockland County requested a child care provider who could care for their child with a developmental disability, 9 families requested a child care provider who could care for their child with Autism Spectrum Disorder and 5 families requested a child care provider who could care for their child with medical needs. Eighty-eight child care providers in the database include the ability to care for a child with a developmental disability in their profile, 4 child care providers include the ability to care for a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder and 29 child care providers include the ability to care for a child with medical needs in their profile. These providers have varied levels of experience ranging from being a certified special education teacher to having had a child with a developmental disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder or medical needs in their care currently or at some time in the past.

CCRR administers two grants for special needs respite care services. These grants provide tuition reimbursement for eligible families based on a variety of qualifying conditions. One grant offered through the

Hudson Valley Office of People with Developmental Disabilities, provided respite child care funding for 17 children from 15 families during the reporting period. This grant also includes funding for a CCRR staff member (The Special Needs Coordinator) to visit, observe and provide technical assistance, training and education to child care programs that care for or are preparing to care for a child with a developmental disability. Through this program, child care providers are able to gain increased understanding of the basic care needs of a child with a developmental disability as well as strategies for instruction and guidance that are developmentally appropriate. During the reporting period, 60 providers received a combined total of 232.5 hours of training and/or technical assistance in caring for a child with a developmental disability. The other grant is offered through the Department of Mental Health. This grant provides respite care funding for families who meet the eligibility criteria by having a child with an emotional disturbance or by having and being treated for a mental illness themselves. Twelve children from 10 families received respite child care funding through this grant.

Summary

Based on the information collected for this report it is evident that there are several areas in need of attention in order to ensure provision of quality consumer service to our clients. One area is the data regarding cost of care. Throughout the reporting period, targeted efforts were made by Family Connections Specialists to obtain current fees from providers during updates in order to ensure the accuracy of the cost of care. However, many providers continue to be reluctant to provide this information for various reasons. Family Connections Specialists will make ongoing attempts to collect the rate information, explain more fully to providers why we collect the information and that it is possible to withhold the rate information when printing referrals.

Another problem is the lack of financial assistance to families seeking quality care for their children. CCRR will continue to explore grant opportunities through large, local employers. Initial contact with these employers have been to share the demographic and statistical information as well as to communicate the benefits to their companies when families are able to access quality, affordable child care.

Transportation to and from child care is an ongoing issue. CCRR will explore creative problem solving with county transportation agencies both public and private, discuss the possibility of providers offering transportation services during updates and welcome visits, discuss transportation alternatives with local school districts and continue to pursue grant opportunities that would provide funding to alleviate this added financial burden to families.

Provider expansion efforts in 2015 have primarily been the result of specific need in the community. Provider recruitment and expansion plans are generated in part by information collected in this report. In addition, semi-annual joint department meetings are held between the Program Standards and Supports Specialists and the Family Connections Specialists. During these meetings information is shared regarding recent openings or closings of providers, current data relating to requests for care and how best to inform providers about the referral process. Discussions also include problem solving ideas to solicit greater compliance from providers in responding to update requests, suggestions for providers who are concerned about their low enrollment (marketing, trends in request for care, how to meet the needs of parents for care, etc.) and communication procedures between departments.

CCRR will continue to make intentional, targeted and ongoing efforts to monitor the supply and demand of child care in Rockland County.