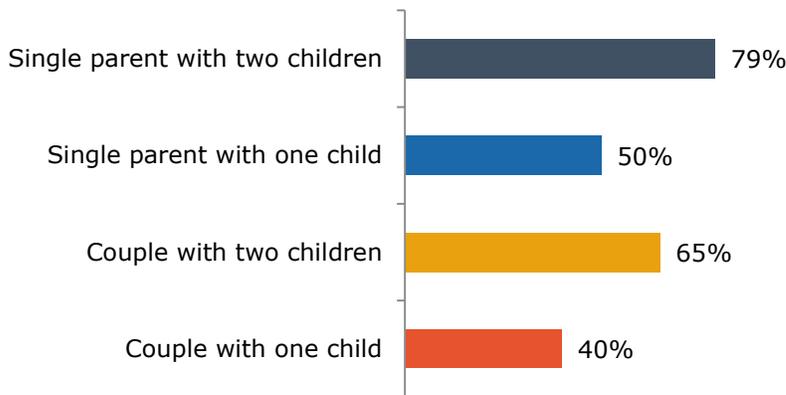


Participation in high quality early childhood programs can help young children prepare for school and is associated with better school performance. Programs with highly qualified staff are also associated with positive results for children.

## Child Care

The costs associated with childcare are often unaffordable to many families. In 2014, the cost of attendance at an infant child care center in Fresno County was approximately \$12,094, while the cost of a preschool was approximately \$8,220<sup>1</sup>. For households in poverty, childcare can account for a significant portion of that family's annual income.<sup>2</sup>

**Cost of Childcare as a Percent of Family Income for Families in Poverty**

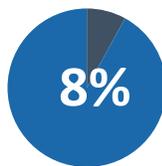


For families that can support the financial burden of childcare, there are various cognitive, social, emotional, and long-term benefits to high quality early care. Despite an increased awareness of the importance of high quality early care, the Center for American Progress finds that programs continue to face challenges, including<sup>3</sup>:

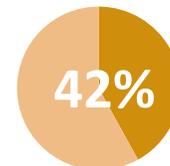
- Standard data tracking and reporting
- Professional development and technical assistance
- Services to dual-language learners
- Services to children with special needs
- Continuity and progress of the educational experience

## Service Needs

Data shows that the need for infant/toddler care and preschool far exceeds the amount of spaces available in countywide programs.



Combined, **Early Head Start and CalWORKS** provide 1,679 spaces for toddler and infants. However, the estimated number of toddlers and infants eligible for these programs is approximately 20,161.



An estimated 23,736 children are eligible or in need of either **Head Start** or **state-based preschool**. However, only 10,039 are enrolled.

<sup>1</sup> Annual Cost of Child Care, by Age and Type of Facility (2014) from kidsdata.org.

<sup>2</sup> Percent of family income is calculated following the 2014 Federal Poverty Line Guidelines.

<sup>3</sup> "Increasing the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Existing Public Investments in Early Childhood Education" by the Center for American Progress (2012).