

# Safeguards for Youth

Data Focus: Strong Start in Education

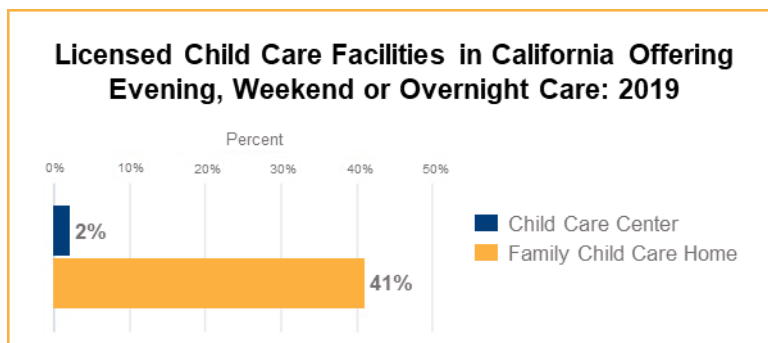


## Protecting Children Involves All Caregivers

A strong start in education is an important protective factor in children's health. Enriching and positive early learning experiences can boost confidence, engagement, and skills, reinforcing a child's long-term educational outcomes and well-being. Education begins long before entering Kindergarten through experiences such as cooperative play in child care settings and reading stories with parents at home. Caregivers in child care settings and at home both play a key role in establishing this solid foundation.

Licensed child care aims to ensure children receive quality services that are safe and protective. It should be equally accessible to all who need it when they need it. However, some families struggle more than others to access licensed child care. Parents working non-traditional schedules or holding multiple jobs often need child care during evenings, weekends, or overnight, but these slots are least available.

Two percent of licensed child care centers and 41% of family child care homes in California offer evening, weekend and overnight care. When addressing the need for more licensed child care slots, it is important to also be mindful of varying work schedules so that all types of families benefit from this protective factor.



Reading together in the home is another way of supporting a strong start in education. Almost two-thirds of California children, 64%, had parents who read to them daily in 2015-2016, and another quarter of children had parents read to them at least three times a week. Promisingly, almost nine out of ten children regularly experience this enriching and protective experience in California.

## Explore the Latest Data on Strong Start in Education

### Child Care

[Children Ages 3-5 Not Enrolled in Preschool or Kindergarten](#)

[Annual Cost of Child Care](#)

[Child Care Slots in Licensed Facilities](#)

[Licensed Child Care Facilities](#)

[Licensed Child Care Facilities Offering Evening, Weekend or Overnight Care](#)

[Requests for Child Care](#)

[Requests for Evening, Weekend or Overnight Child Care](#)

### Reading

[Young Children Whose Parents Read with Them, by Frequency](#)

## About Safeguards for Youth

Safeguards for Youth is a compilation of the latest data on promoting California children's health and well-being. The data describe protective factors and supportive services, both of which are critical to building a solid foundation for life and addressing the effects of childhood adversity. Protective factors highlight the importance of preventive health care, a strong start in education, and a nurturing school community. Supportive services address adverse experiences such as health challenges, abuse, and family poverty. These data stress the urgency for advocacy and policy change to safeguard California's future generations.

Learn more at: [kidsdata.org/Safeguards](https://kidsdata.org/Safeguards)