



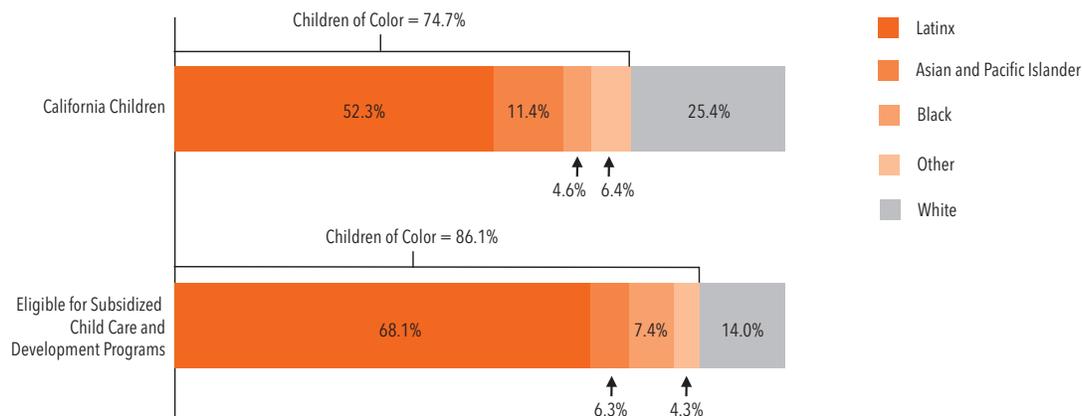
BY KRISTIN SCHUMACHER

Subsidized Child Care Can Help Reduce Barriers to Success for Children of Color, but Few Receive It in California

Children of color are more likely than white children to live in poverty in California, largely due to a legacy of racist policies and practices and ongoing discrimination.¹ These persistent inequities have limited opportunity and economic mobility for many families of color.² Living in poverty increases the odds that children will experience hardships that adversely affect their development, health, and well-being.³ California’s subsidized child care and development programs aim to mitigate the effects of poverty by boosting families’ economic security and supporting child development. Because children of color are more likely to live in families with low incomes, they are disproportionately eligible for child care and development programs. In California, children of color make up nearly 74.7% of all children ages 12 and under, but comprise 86.1% of children eligible for subsidized care. This gap is widest for Latinx children (52.3% of the 12-and-under population, compared to 68.1% of children eligible for care).

Overall, Children of Color Are Disproportionately Eligible for Subsidized Child Care and Development Programs

Race and Ethnicity of California Children Birth Through Age 12, 2017

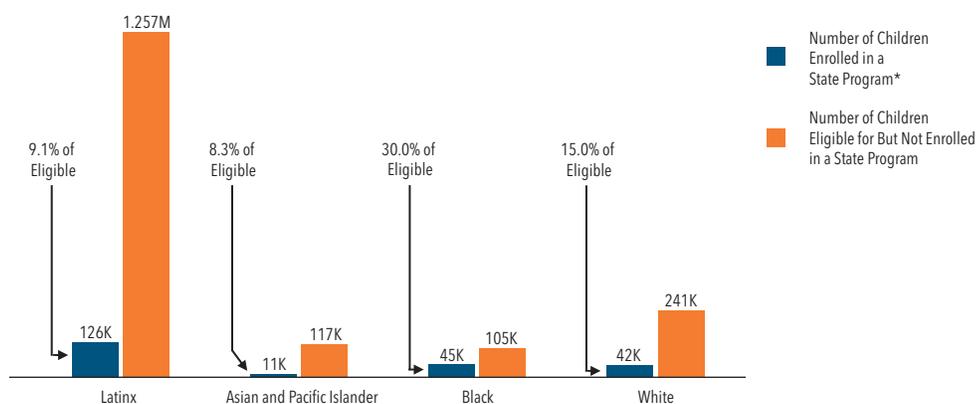


Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive. The “Other” category includes Native American, multiracial, and unspecified races. Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey data

Overall, of the more than 2 million estimated children birth through age 12 who were eligible for subsidized child care and development programs, just 1 in 9 were enrolled in a subsidized child care program or the full-day, full-year California State Preschool Program.⁴ The share of eligible children enrolled in a state program was low across all racial and ethnic groups, ranging from 8.3% of eligible Asian and Pacific Islander children to 30.0% of eligible black children.⁵ Nearly 1.4 million Latinx children were eligible for subsidized care, but only 126,100 (9.1%) were enrolled in a state program. Even for black children – the demographic group with the highest share of eligible children enrolled in a full-day, full-year program – roughly 2 out of 3 eligible children did not receive subsidized care.

Enrollment in Subsidized Child Care and Full-Day State Preschool Varies by Race and Ethnicity

Estimated Number of California Children Eligible for Subsidized Child Care = 2,032,000



* Enrollment is for children from birth through age 12 in October 2017, except for California Community College CalWORKs Stage 2 data, which reflects a Department of Finance estimate for the 2017-18 fiscal year. Includes children enrolled in full-day California State Preschool Program (CSPP). Excludes children enrolled in the part-day CSPP or the Handicapped Child Care Program. The race and ethnicity figures are estimated for CalWORKs Stage 1 and California Community Colleges CalWORKs Stage 2.

Note: Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive. Native American, multiracial, and unspecified race categories not shown here.

Source: Budget Center analysis of data from the California Department of Education, Department of Finance, Department of Social Services, and US Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey data

Governor Newsom has signaled the intent to continue to invest in California's subsidized child care and development system. Boosting funding for this system is a key way to reduce barriers to success for children of color. Yet, policymakers should use a race-equity lens to ensure that new funding is targeted to children, families, and communities of color that have historically been left behind.

This analysis is the third part of a multiphase effort to analyze subsidized child care and development programs in California. Other phases of this work examine the total unmet need for subsidized child care and unmet need across different age groups. Support for this Fact Sheet was provided by First 5 California.

¹ Alissa Anderson, *If The Poverty Rate for Kids of Color Were As Low as That for White Kids, 977,000 Fewer Kids Would be in Poverty* (California Budget & Policy Center: April 2018).

² Ruth Cosse, et al., *Building Strong Foundations: Racial Inequity in Policies that Impact Infants, Toddlers, and Families* (CLASP and Zero to Three: November 2018).

³ Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, *The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood* (July 2010) and Slopen, et al., "Racial Disparities in Child Adversity in the US: Interactions With Family Immigration History and Income," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 50 (2016).

⁴ Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data. Data limitations likely result in a conservative estimate of the number of children in California who are eligible for subsidized child care. Families are eligible for subsidized child care if the child who would receive care is under the age of 13; the family establishes an appropriate eligibility status, such as by having an income below the limit set by the state; and the family demonstrates a need for care, such as parental employment. For more information about the methodology used to calculate this estimate, see the Technical Appendix: https://calbudgetcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Technical-Appendix_Calculating-the-Need-for-Subsidized-Child-Care-in-California_01.2019.pdf.

⁵ Figures reflect children enrolled in the full-day California State Preschool Program (CSPP) or in one of the following subsidized child care programs: Alternative Payment Program; CalWORKs Stages One, Two, or Three; Family Child Care Home Network; General Child Care; and the Migrant Child Care and Development Program. Enrollment is for October 2017, except for California Community College CalWORKs Stage Two, which reflects a Department of Finance estimate for the 2017-18 fiscal year. This analysis also includes the full-day CSPP, which consists of part-day preschool and "wraparound" child care, because it accommodates many – although not all – families' work schedules throughout the year, and thus approximates the experience that a child would have in a subsidized child care program. In contrast, this analysis excludes roughly 97,000 children who were enrolled in the part-day CSPP, without access to wraparound child care, in October 2017. This is because most families with low and moderate incomes likely need wraparound care in order to supplement the CSPP's part-day, part-year schedule. This analysis reports enrollment data for a single month – as opposed to a monthly average for 2017 – because the California Department of Education (CDE) does not typically separate part-day and full-day CSPP enrollment when reporting monthly averages for a single fiscal year. The CDE also states, "Caution should be used when interpreting monthly averages as some programs do not operate at full capacity throughout the entire year (e.g., State Preschool) while other programs have seasonal fluctuations in enrollment (e.g., Migrant Child Care)." Finally, the data are for October 2017 because the CDE's point-in-time reports are only available for the month of October. See Kristin Schumacher, *Millions of Children Are Eligible for Subsidized Child Care, but Only a Fraction Received Services in 2017* (California Budget & Policy Center: January 2019).