

Nelson County ECCE Gap Analysis

ECCE Availability Gap - Ready Region Blue Ridge

This report describes the availability of classrooms accepting public funding and the associated need in Ready Region Blue Ridge. Below is an overview of the Region at large, followed by specifics to Nelson County.

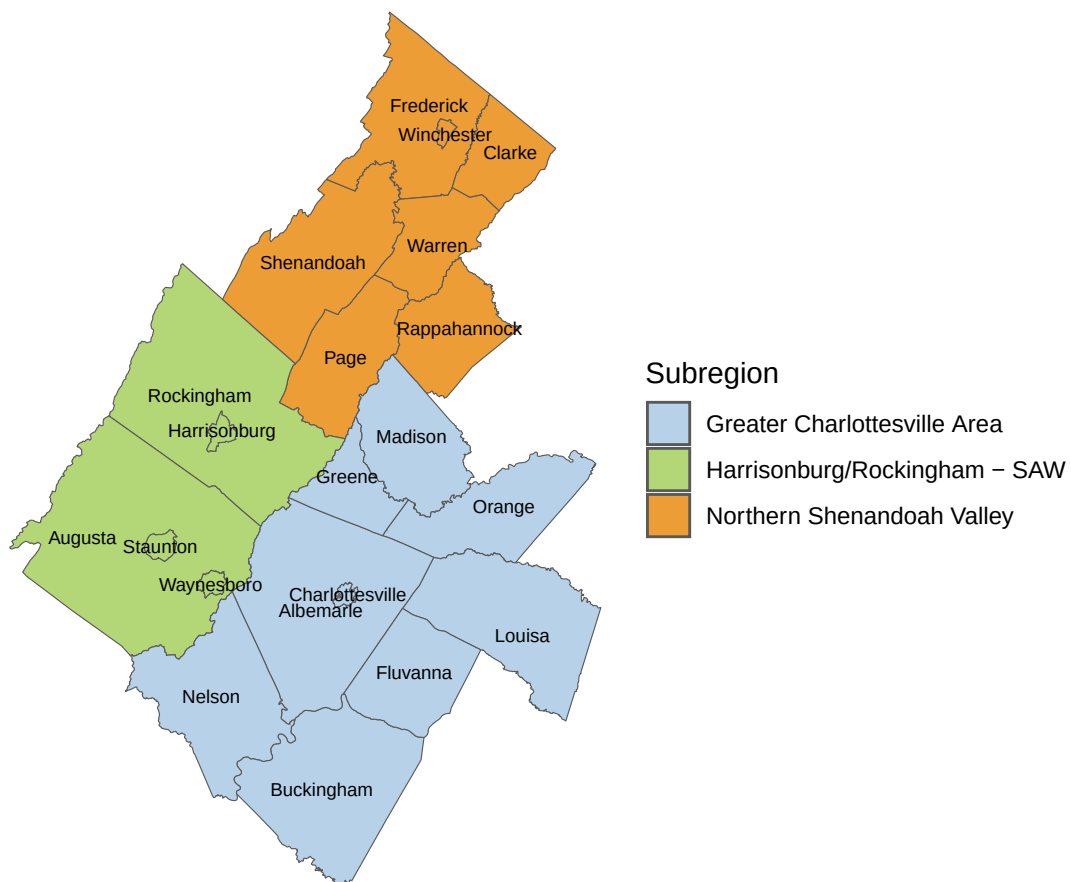


Table 1: Classrooms Accepting Subsidy

Subregion	VACCSP	EarlyHeadStart	HeadStart	VECFMD	VPI
Greater Charlottesville Area	154	3	17	17	60
Harrisonburg/Rockingham - SAW	117	4	12	23	72
Northern Shenandoah Valley	134	0	9	18	44
Total	405	7	38	58	176

Currently in Virginia, there are four primary sources of public early childhood care and education (ECCE) funding:

- Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), serving 3- and 4-year-olds with qualifying factors before their first year of kindergarten
- Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS), serving birth to 5-year-olds with qualifying factors
- Child Care Subsidy (CCSP), serving birth to 12-year-olds with qualifying factors
- Mixed Delivery (MD), serving birth to 4-year-olds with qualifying factors

In all cases, income is a key qualifying factor. Other factors can include homelessness, parental education level, and child disability status. For the purpose of this report, income is assumed to be the only/most important qualifying factor for estimating need.

Table 2: Shortfalls by Subregion - RRBR

Subregion	0-2 Shortfall	PreK 3-4 Shortfall	Total Shortfall
GCA	2,682	618	3,300
HR/SAW	3,170	719	3,880
NSV	3,006	1,058	4,064
RRBR Total	8,858	2,395	11,244

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Table 3 shows an approximate number of children by age in Nelson County taken from the National Center for Health Statistics (taken from 2020 decennial Census survey data, the most recent year for single age estimates).

Table 3: Population Estimates - Children 0-4

Locality	Total 0-4	Age 0	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4
Nelson County	681	137	142	157	129	116

^a Source: National Center for Health Statistics. Single Year of Age County Population Estimates, 1969-2020.

<https://seer.cancer.gov/popdata/singleages.html>

Table 4 shows estimated ECCE slots for Nelson County by age and subsidy program.

Table 4: Slots by Subsidy Type and Age - FY25

Subsidy	0-2	3-4
VPI	0	33
MD	0	0
EHS/HS	8	34
CCSP	9	12
Total	17	79

Nelson County has a total of **17** infant/toddler 0-2 slots and **79** PreK 3-4 slots.

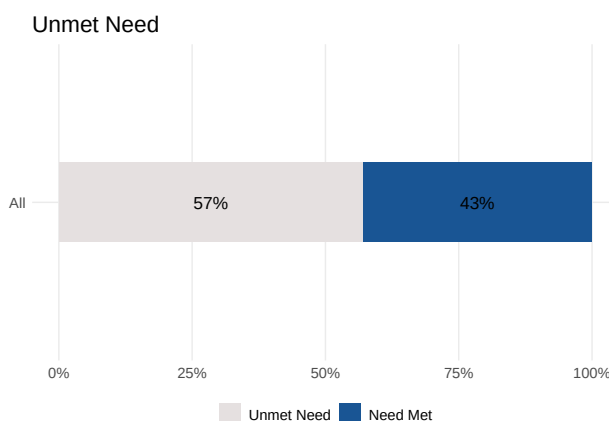
Taking income as the key qualifying factor in most programs, comparing the number of children ages 0-4 in households living under 200% of the federal poverty level to the number of subsidy slots available in Nelson County shows a shortfall of 127

Note that the numbers of children in households less than <200% FPL are estimates derived from Census survey data and are subject to sampling error.

Table 5: Slot Shortfall

<200% FPL ^a	Slots	Shortfall
223	96	127

^a 2022 5-Year American Community Survey.
Table B17024: Age by Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months



Assuming classroom sizes of 8 for infant/toddler/2's and 18 for PreK, the above shortfall numbers would mean a shortage of 16 infant/toddler classrooms and 1 PreK classrooms.

Affordability Gap

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines affordable ECCE as no more than 7% of household income.¹

Table 6 and 7 show the average annual rate for each classroom type and the affordability income, the amount of money a household would need to make in order for that ECCE annual rate to be 7% or less of their annual household income. While average annual rates are shown below, we have seen rates as high as \$27,300 for infant care, \$26,780 for toddlers and \$22,152 for PreK in our region.

Table 6: Ready Region Blue Ridge

ClassroomType	Average Annual Rate	Income Needed
Infant (0-15 mo.) Classroom	\$14,773	\$211,047
Toddler (16-35 mo.) Classroom	\$13,496	\$192,802
Preschool Classroom	\$11,731	\$167,590

In Ready Region Blue Ridge, a family looking for ECCE needs to make between **\$167,590** and **\$211,047** in household income in order for their annual rate to be affordable.

Table 7 below shows incomes needed specific to your locality.

Table 7: Greater Charlottesville Area

ClassroomType	Average Annual Rate	Income Needed
Infant (0-15 mo.) Classroom	\$17,627	\$251,817
Toddler (16-35 mo.) Classroom	\$15,039	\$214,847
Preschool Classroom	\$13,362	\$190,886

In Nelson County, a family needs to make between \$190,886 – \$251,817 for ECCE not to exceed 7% of their income.

Family income is typically the key qualifying factor towards eligibility for our early education programs accepting public funding. Families in these programs are typically households earning less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For context, below is a table of what 200% FPL is for different household sizes.² Compare the incomes needed for affordability above in tables 6 and 7 to the family incomes commonly seen below.

Table 8: 2025 Poverty Guidelines

Household Size	200% FPL
2	\$42,300
3	\$53,300
4	\$64,300
5	\$75,300
6	\$86,300
7	\$97,300
8	\$108,300

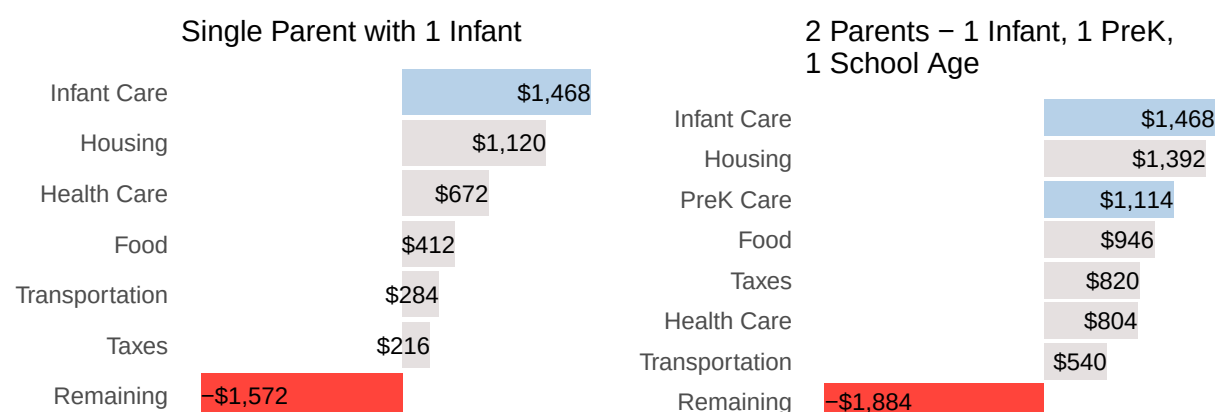
¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Child Care 2024

²U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation 2025

Affordability Examples

Per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the top 3 most common occupations and their median annual wages in your closest metropolitan statistical area (Charlottesville MSA) are Fast Food and Counter Worker(\$30,141), Registered Nurse(\$95,181), and Retail Salesperson(\$31,200).³

Consider an adult earning \$31,200, the median of those three occupations. Below are examples of monthly budgets for one adult with an infant (left) and 2 adults both making the average salary with 1 infant, 1 PreK aged child and one school age child. In both examples, take note of the proportion spent on early education compared to other necessary expenses like housing, food, transportation, and health care.



Wage Data: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics; May 2024; <<https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>>

Expenses Data: The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Virginia, 2021; The Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington

Taxes: Calculated by applying 2024 federal and state income tax and FICA tax rates to example salary minus applicable child tax credits

Closing Remarks

This report is intended to provide an overview of ECCE availability and affordability for Ready Region Blue Ridge and your locality. The tables and figures provided may be used as support in communications with various audiences.

The examples of monthly budgets are meant to describe average families by picking common jobs and their associated average wages. They are not all encompassing and we encourage readers to explore the exercise with other examples of family composition and wages. We hope that these examples may illustrate the situations that a family in your locality may face with early child care and education before their children arrive to kindergarten.

³U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics; May 2024; <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>