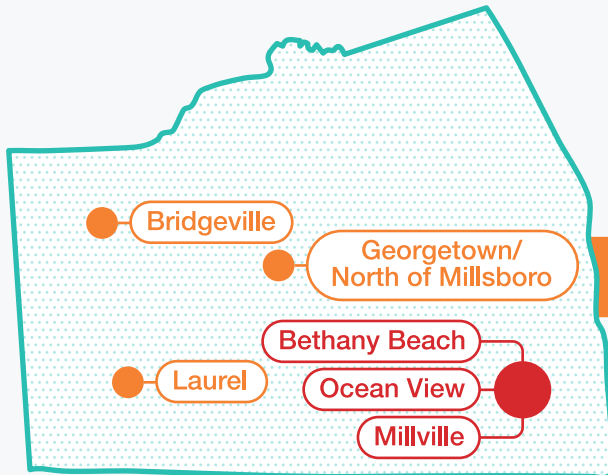


The Breaking Point: 3 Children for Every 1 Available Licensed Child Care Seat in Sussex County



Sussex County has several hotspots with **severe child care shortages**, areas where the demand for care far outweighs the supply.

Ratio of children to available child care seats

4:1



6:1



Sussex County
Average

3:1

Statewide
Average

2:1

Over Two Thirds of Sussex County Children Are Without Access to Early Childhood Education

24,250

Total estimated children ages 0-9

Available child care options can serve up to 7,644 kids

32%
Licensed Capacity

68%
Unmet Need

Leaving nearly **16,606** kids not being served

Sussex County also has **long waiting lists of up to 2-3 years**



Housing Prices and Child Care Costs Push Sussex County Families to the Brink

Crushing costs force families into **difficult decisions**:

CONTRACT



Turning down jobs



Cutting work hours



Delaying their own education



Considering leaving Delaware altogether

Average Statewide Cost Per Month



Child care
two children

\$2,660

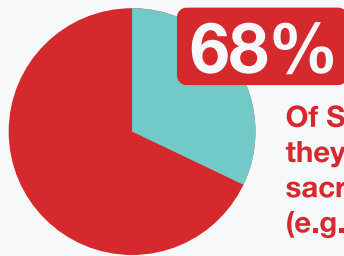


Housing: two
bedroom unit

\$1,450



Hearing From Sussex County Parents



Of Sussex County families said they are taking on debt and/or sacrificing savings/goals (e.g., buying a home).

“We spend **more in child care than housing**. The cost of child care **doesn't make sense** when the workers taking care of our children aren't even making adequate money to make a living.”

“It's just so expensive. I work two jobs just to be able to afford child care so I can work the first job... My family is at a terrible financial position where we get no aid but don't quite make enough to keep up with everything without it so we just collect more and more debt.”

Sussex County families on what would make it easier to work, go to school, or run a business:

68%
Said more affordable child care



34%
Said more care closer to home

“In Western Sussex, there are few to no pre-K programs.”

Additionally, families also said extended or nontraditional child care hours, financial support from employers, and family-friendly workplace policies would help

Voices From Sussex County Employers

Delaware employers lose an estimated **\$415 million annually** due to employee turnover and absenteeism due to child care challenges

Operational and Scheduling Disruptions

“There are times when **staff is late, has to leave early or simply calls out** since there is no reliable child care available.”

83%
Of Sussex County employers heard from their employees that child care is hard to find



75%
Of Sussex County employers said child care challenges have caused employees to miss work entirely

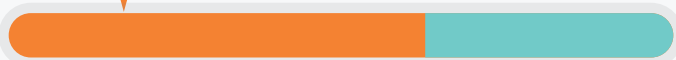
Revenue Loss During Peak Periods

“**Child care closures**—especially around **busy holidays**—cause the staff to **miss days** that would provide more substantial income [for our business].”

Workforce Underutilization

63%

Of Sussex County employers said child care challenges have caused employees to reduce their hours

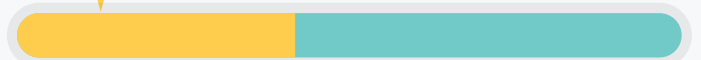


“There is a **lack of child care in Sussex** so most parents will tag-team child care – **one works during the day and one at night** to make it work.”

Business Growth Constraints

42%

Of Sussex County employers said child care challenges have caused reduction in hours, services, or products



“[We are] **unable to hire enough people** to expand, sometimes due to their **lack of affordable child care**.”