



# Early Childhood Community Assessment



**2023**

Archuleta County,  
Colorado

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

The mission of Early Childhood Council of Archuleta Council (ECCAC) is *to foster and sustain a comprehensive, high-quality, and accessible early childhood system that supports families and the community in order to prepare children for academic and personal success in life*. ECCAC has developed this Early Childhood Community Assessment to identify the state of early childhood services for children aged birth-five in Archuleta County in southwestern Colorado. Key findings will support the Council's mission and its understanding of the current demographics, strengths, and needs of families with young children. The Assessment is intended for the design of the Council's plans to meet community and child care provider needs, and to build upon current strengths and early childhood systems within the county.

ECCAC utilized the services of Spiridis Consulting LLC to facilitate the Assessment process, including survey development, data research, analysis, and compilation of this final report. Methods utilized for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data information included:

- discussions with ECCAC leadership;
- an Early Childhood/Child Care Provider survey;
- local, state, and federal data resources;
- 2020 Census Bureau data; and
- American Community Survey, 2021 and 2022 Five Year estimates\*.

The Early Childhood Community Assessment is intended to guide planning and programming to meet families' needs, build on strengths and resources of the local community, and aid in reducing identified barriers to self-sufficiency for at-risk families. Leadership and the ECCAC Board of Directors will use data from the Assessment to inform decisions including, but not limited to:

- Determination of long- and short-range program goals, objectives, and priorities;
- Needed supports for child care programs to navigate early childhood regulations and systems, to receive professional development, to access quality improvement funds, and more;
- Advocacy and support for additional early childhood funding based on service gaps;
- Community collaborations to develop, strengthen, or provide needed services; and
- Awareness and reduction of any inequities within the community and early childhood systems.

\*The American Community Survey (ACS) collects and produces information on social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics about the U.S. population. The ACS is an official Census Bureau survey that is part of the decennial census program. Every year, the Census Bureau contacts over 3.5 million households nationwide to participate in the ACS. The survey is sent to a percentage of households monthly. These data are used to track shifting demographics and learn about local communities.<sup>1</sup>

Notes: Spiridis Consulting utilizes 5-Year ACS estimates, which have smaller margins of error than 1-year estimates.

To the greatest extent possible, the most recent public data available has been included. Some caution should be taken for 2020 and 2021 data which may be skewed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sources for Key Findings are noted within the report.

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## KEY FINDINGS

The need for increased affordable, quality early childhood services is critical in Archuleta County in southwest Colorado. This Executive Summary highlights key findings from the assessment that most impact services for young children, families, and communities in the county.

### Demographics

Approximately 4.2% (559 children) of Archuleta County's population are aged birth to four years old, 6.0% (810 children) are aged 5-9 years old, and 4.8% (648 children) are aged 10-14 years old, totaling 2,017 children ages 0-14. Between 2010 and 2020, Archuleta County's population increased by 10.6% or 1,275 people, compared to 14.8% in Colorado. Continued moderate population growth in Archuleta County is predicted for all age groups. Of households, 70.5% are family households, more than Colorado at 63.2%. Approximately 25% of children live in single-parent households, compared to 21% in Colorado.

Following is the county's non-Hispanic population by race: White (93.1%); Native American/Alaskan Native (2.4%); Multiple Races (2.6%); Asian (1.2%); Black (0.2%); Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.2%); and Other Race (0.4%). Of the total population, 18.6% is Hispanic. No migrant students were reported in the local public school district during 2022-23. During SY 2022-23, 5.1% of local K-12 students were English Language Learners, compared to 12.4% in Colorado. Of the county population, 7% speak Spanish as the primary language.

### Quality Early Childhood and Child Care Overview

Archuleta County is a "child care desert," meaning there are not enough licensed child care slots to adequately serve children. An area is identified as a child care "desert" if there are three or more children under the age of five per available child care slot in local child care centers or family child care homes.

As mentioned above, the county has 559 children under the age of five and a total of 2,017 children aged 0-14. There are an estimated 335 infants and toddlers and 224 preschool-aged children. Archuleta County's child care capacity is insufficient. The greatest needs are for quality infant and toddler care.

- *There is no center-based infant care in the county and only 32 center-based toddler slots.*
- There are less than 10 infant and toddler slots available in Family Child Care (FCC) homes.
- The county has 5 licensed child care (including two Head Start centers) with capacity for 183 children and a separate program for 100 school-age children.
- Additionally, there are four FCC homes with a capacity for just 38 children (ages birth – 12).
- There is one licensed school age facility with a capacity of 100 school-age children.
- For children living in poverty or at-risk, there is enrollment for 48 Head Start children, ages 3-5 years of age and not eligible for kindergarten and Early Head Start enrollment for 8 toddlers. Of 128 children under age five in Pagosa Springs, 21.1% or 27 children are living in poverty.
- Through the Universal Pre-K (UPK) program, Colorado families can now receive at least 15 hours per week of free, voluntary preschool for 4-year-olds. Three-year-olds with qualifying risk factors are eligible for 10 free hours per week.
- Two home visiting programs are in the county to provide children home-based services.

## Challenges for Working Families

Low access to high quality, affordable child care/early childhood programs negatively impacts labor force participation and family economic stability. Of children under age six, an estimated 55.5% in Archuleta County have all parents in the labor force, compared to 64.8% in Colorado. Between 2019 and 2021, children with all parents in the labor force in Archuleta County decreased by 12%.

On January 1, 2024, Colorado's state minimum wage rate will increase from \$13.65/hour to \$14.42/hour. A full time (2,080 hours) minimum wage worker will earn \$29,994/year. Archuleta County's median household income is estimated at just \$66,813, over \$20,000 lower than Colorado (\$87,598). Further, the living wage for one adult and one child—the hourly rate that a full-time working individual must earn to adequately support the family and cover day-to-day expenses—is \$36.30 in Archuleta County. A full-time working adult with one child who is making minimum wage earns just 39.7% of the living wage—often putting the costs of quality child care out of reach.

## High costs of Child Care and Low Subsidized Child Care Slots

Colorado is one of the most expensive states for child care. A two-parent household spends 12% of their income on child care, while the Department of Health and Human Services defines spending over 7% to be a cost burden.

Infant	Toddler	4-Year-Old	Before/After School
\$19,573	\$16,307	\$13,809	\$7,736

- The annual cost of center-based infant care in Colorado is \$19,573, ranking the state as the third least affordable in the U.S. for center-based infant care.
- Center-based toddler care is \$16,307, ranking Colorado as the fourth least affordable state for center-based toddler care.
- Infant/toddler care in a Family Child Care (FCC) Home is \$12,750, ranking the state as the fifth least affordable for infant/toddler FCC care.
- Center-based preschool care is \$13,809, ranking Colorado as the fifth least affordable state for preschool center-based care.
- Before and after school care in Colorado averages \$7,736.

Archuleta County's child care capacity is low and subsidized child care slots are even fewer. Four child care centers—with capacity for only 167 children—accept financial assistance via the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Only one FCC Home—with capacity for 12 children—accepts CCAP. For families receiving a subsidy, they can pay between \$1 and \$584 per month for one child in care.

## Birth Outcomes

- In 2022, there were 94 live births in Archuleta County, compared to 120 births in 2019 (-21.7%).
- In 2022, 91.5% of births in Archuleta County were to women aged 20 and over. Six percent of births were to women aged 18-19 and 2.5% were to women 17 and younger.
- In 2022, 34% of expectant mothers in Archuleta County received prenatal care *after* the first trimester; this was the highest rate in five years and nearly double the rate of Colorado (17.6%).

- In 2022, 18.1% of births in Archuleta County were to mothers with less than a high school diploma or GED, nearly double the rate of Colorado (9.8%).
- In 2022, the rate of births in Archuleta County with a low birth weight (under 5.5 lbs.) was 7.4%; this was the lowest rate in five years and lower than Colorado (9.9%).

### Early Childhood/Child Care Provider Survey

As part of the Assessment process, a survey was distributed to Early Childhood/Child Care Providers in Archuleta County. Four providers participated, representing child care, Universal Pre-K, Head Start/Early Head Start, and FCC Homes. Respondents supplied information regarding enrollment capacity by age group, operational hours, current quality rating, etc. This information has been incorporated into the previous key findings. No provider reduced enrollment within the past two years.

Survey participants were asked to choose their program’s top three challenges.

Challenges	% of Respondents
Finding potential staff who meet all position qualifications	50.0%
Providing sufficient preschool slots to meet community demand	50.0%
Maintaining full child enrollment	25.0%
Needing to raise child care rates to meet increased expenses	25.0%
Having bilingual staff to communicate with children and families	25.0%
Providing sufficient infant/toddler slots to meet community demand	25.0%
Other (please specify) No Issues	25.0%
Being able to offer a high enough salary to attract new staff	0.0%
Retaining staff	0.0%
Paying staff or paying myself as a sole provider	0.0%
Proving benefits for staff or myself as a sole provider	0.0%
Reduced federal or state funding	0.0%
Paying for mortgage, facility repairs, or needed equipment	0.0%
Providing sufficient school-age slots to meet community demand	0.0%
Providing enough hours of care for working families.	0.0%

Survey participants were asked what professional development/training topics are most needed or requested by staff. Responses are as follows:

- Managing Stress, Burnout/Self Care (3 providers)
- Classroom Management/Positive Guidance Strategies (2 providers)
- Child Growth and Development
- Literacy
- Support for Children with Challenging Behaviors
- Healthy Boundaries with Parents
- Positive and Engaging Transitions
- Math

Survey participants were asked to share what specific support ECCAC could best give. Two providers stressed the importance and benefit of a Mental Health Specialist/Consultant.



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Archuleta County covers 1,356 square miles of the San Juan Mountains in southwestern Colorado. Of the total area, 1350 square miles is land and just 5.3 square miles is water. Archuleta County shares borders with Mineral County to the north; Rio Grande County to the northeast; Conejos County to the east; Rio Arriba County, NM to the south; San Juan County, NM to the southwest; La Plata County to the west; and Hinsdale County to the northwest. The county seat and the only incorporated municipality in the county is Pagosa Springs. As of 2023, the estimated county population is 13,509.

According to the Colorado Encyclopedia, “Before Europeans arrived, the area of Archuleta County was first occupied by Ancestral Pueblo peoples and later by Apache, Navajo, and Ute peoples.” The Southern Ute Indian Reservation in southwestern Colorado is near the northern New Mexico state line and makes up over 128,000 acres. Its territory consists of land from three counties, including Archuleta, La Plata, and Montezuma counties. The county has over 400,000 acres of national forest land and is home to Chimney Rock National Monument. The San Juan River flows southwest across the county, through Pagosa Springs; it receives the Navajo River about a mile north of the New Mexico border. The Piedra River flows southward in the western part of Archuleta County, joining the San Juan at the northern end of Navajo Reservoir near the town of Arboles. Major roads include US Routes 160 and 84 and state route 151.<sup>2</sup>

Archuleta County is part of the Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, which also serves the counties of Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma and San Juan, and the cities and towns within those regions, as well as the Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribes. Employment within the county centers around Construction, Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services, and Retail Trade.<sup>3</sup>





## DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION

A total of 13,509 people live in the 1,350.09 square mile county of Archuleta, with a population density of 10 people per square mile; this is significantly less than the Colorado population density of 56 persons per square mile.<sup>4</sup>

A significant positive or negative shift in total population over time impacts healthcare providers and the utilization of community resources. Between 2010 and 2020, Archuleta County's population increased by 10.6% or 1,275 people, compared to a growth of 14.8% in Colorado overall.<sup>5</sup>

#### Population Density

Location	Total Estimated Population, 2022	Total Land Area (Square Miles)	Population Density (Per Square Mile)
Colorado	5,770,790	103,637.08	56
Archuleta County	13,509	1,350.09	10

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

#### 2010-2020 Population Change

Location	Population		Change 2010-2020	
	2010	2020	Count	Percent
Colorado	5,029,186	5,773,714	744,528	14.8%
Archuleta County	12,084	13,359	1,275	10.6%
Pagosa Springs	1,727	1,571	-156	-9.0%
Arboles*	280	308	28	10.0%
Chromo**	115	110	-5	-4.4%

\*Census Designated Place \*\*Location is a ZCTA5, which stands for Census 5-Digit ZIP Code Tabulation Area1. It is an approximate area representation of U.S. Postal Service ZIP Code service areas that the Census Bureau creates to present statistical data. ZCTAs are based on zip codes but don't necessarily follow exact zip code boundaries.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

### AGE

Approximately 4.2% (567 children) of Archuleta County's population are aged birth to four years old, while 6.0% (810 children) of the population are aged 5-9 years old.<sup>6</sup>

#### Population by Age Groups

Location	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Colorado	5.2%	5.6%	6.2%	6.3%	6.8%	15.7%	14.8%	12.0%	11.8%	15.7%
Archuleta County	4.2%	6.0%	4.8%	4.5%	3.4%	9.0%	10.0%	14.2%	21.1%	21.9%
	559	810	648	605	462	1,213	1,685	1,455	2,411	3,653

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

## RACE AND ETHNICITY

Following is the non-Hispanic population of Archuleta County by race:<sup>7</sup> White (93.1%); Native American/Alaskan Native (2.4%); Multiple Races (2.6%); Asian (1.2%); Black (0.2%); Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.2%); and Other Race (0.4%). Of the total population, 18.6% is Hispanic.

### Non-Hispanic Population by Race Alone

Location	White	Black/ African American	Asian	AIAN	NHPI	Other Race	Multiple Races
<b>Colorado</b>	85.5%	5.0%	4.0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%	4.3%
Archuleta County	93.1%	0.2%	1.2%	2.4%	0.2%	0.4%	2.6%
	10,050	21	125	267	19	39	279

AIAN=American Indian/Alaskan Native, NHPI=Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

### Population By Hispanic Origin

Location	Hispanic Population		Non-Hispanic Population	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Colorado</b>	1,254,636	21.9%	4,468,540	78.1%
Archuleta County	2,467	18.6%	10,800	81.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates, B03003

## PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Of Archuleta County's population, 92.3% speaks English, 7% speaks Spanish, 0.5% speaks Indo-European languages, 0.1% speaks Asian languages, and 0.1% speaks Other Languages.<sup>8</sup>

### Languages Spoken at Home

	English	Spanish	Indo- European Languages	Asian Languages	Other Languages
<b>Colorado</b>	83.8%	11.0%	2.3%	1.9%	1.0%
Archuleta County	92.3%	7.0%	0.5%	0.1%	0.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

During SY 2022-23, 5.1% of K-12 students in Archuleta County were English Language Learners, compared to 12.4% in Colorado.<sup>9</sup>

### English Language Learners by School District (K-12)

Location	Percent
<b>Colorado</b>	12.4%
Archuleta County	5.1%

Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2022-23

## FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

Of the population, 3.9% (512 people) in Archuleta County are estimated to be foreign-born, compared to 9.5% in Colorado. Of the foreign-born population, an estimated 53.5% in the county have become naturalized citizens.<sup>10</sup> During school year 2022-23, Archuleta County did not report any migrant students.

### Foreign-Born Population

Location	Foreign-Born Population		Foreign-Born Population with Citizenship		Foreign-Born Population without Citizenship	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Colorado</b>	545,464	9.5%	255,062	46.8%	290,402	53.2%
Archuleta Co.	512	3.9%	274	53.5%	238	46.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates

## HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

According to the American Community Survey subject definitions, “A family household is any housing unit in which the householder is living with one or more individuals related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. A non-family household is any household occupied by the householder alone, or by the householder and one or more unrelated individuals.”

Of households in Archuleta County, 70.5% are family households, more than Colorado at 63.2%. Of children in Archuleta County, 25% are estimated to be living in single-parent households, compared to 21% of children in Colorado.<sup>11</sup>

### Household Composition

Location	Total Households	Family Households		Non-Family Households	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Colorado</b>	2,227,932	1,408,477	63.2%	819,455	36.8%
Archuleta County	5,770	4,065	70.5%	1,705	29.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates

### Children in Single-Parent Households

Location	Single-Parent Households
<b>Colorado</b>	25%
Archuleta County	12%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

The estimated rate of adults aged 25 and older without a high school diploma is 6% in Archuleta County, lower than Colorado at 7.6%. Of the Archuleta County population, 71.8% has an associate degree or higher, the same as Colorado overall.<sup>12</sup>

### Educational Attainment

	No High School Diploma or G.E.D.	High School Diploma or G.E.D.	Some College	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
<b>Colorado</b>	7.6%	20.6%	20.5%	8.5%	42.8%
Archuleta Co.	6.0%	21.9%	26.7%	5.6%	39.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Archuleta County School District's four-year high school graduation rate for the Class of 2022 was 89.7%, higher than Colorado (82.3%).

### 4-Year High School Graduation Rate, Class of 2022<sup>13</sup>

Group	Archuleta County School District		Colorado
	# of Graduates	Percent	
<b>Overall Graduation Rate</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>89.7%</b>	<b>82.3%</b>
Economically Disadvantaged	30	88.2%	71.9%
English Language Learners	2	100%	69.4%
Foster Care	Not Applicable	-----	30.0%
Homeless	Not Applicable	-----	55.4%
Migrant	Not Applicable	-----	69.0%
Students of Color	33	89.2%	76.8%
Students with Disabilities	15	100.0%	67.9%

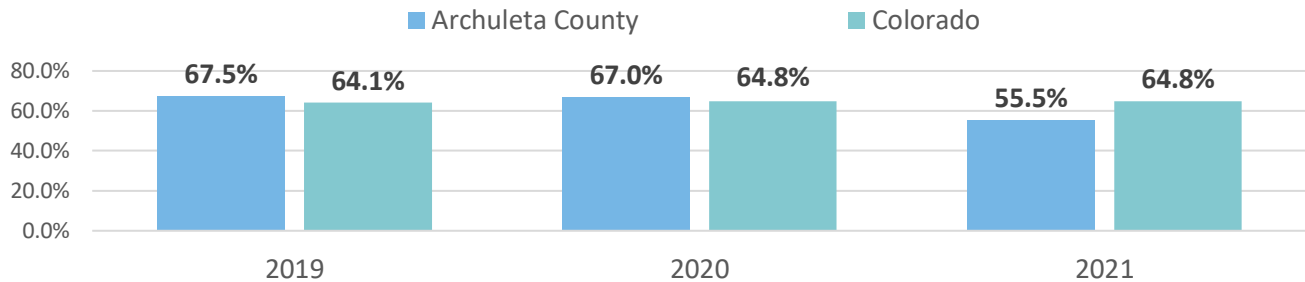
Source: Colorado Department of Education

## INCOME & WORKING FAMILIES

Of children under age six, an estimated 55.5% in Archuleta County have all parents in the labor force, compared to 64.8% in Colorado. Between 2019 and 2021, children with all parents in the labor force in Archuleta County decreased by 12%.<sup>14</sup>

### Children Under Age 6 With All Parents in the Labor Force

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates



### Income and Living Wage

Colorado's State minimum wage rate increased from \$13.65/hour to \$14.42/hour on January 1, 2024. A full time (2,080 hours) minimum wage worker earns \$29,994 per year (gross pay). Archuleta County's median household income is estimated at \$66,813, significantly lower than Colorado (\$87,598).<sup>15</sup>

#### Household Income Levels

Location	Mean (Average) Income	Median Income	Under \$25,000	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$199,999	\$200,000+
Colorado	\$117,508	\$87,598	12.0%	15.3%	28.8%	30.0%	13.9%
Archuleta	\$90,766	\$66,813	15.8%	20.7%	31.3%	22.7%	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

The living wage—the hourly rate that a full-time working individual must earn to adequately support the family and cover day-to-day expenses. The living wage needed to support one adult and one child is \$36.30 in Archuleta County. A full-time working adult with one child who is making minimum wage earns just 39.7% of the living wage.<sup>16</sup>

#### Living Wage, Archuleta County

1 Adult				2 Adults (1 Working)				2 Adults (Both Working)			
Number of Children				Number of Children				Number of Children			
0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
\$17.64	\$36.30	\$46.70	\$61.17	\$27.52	\$34.98	\$40.16	\$44.83	\$13.76	\$20.26	\$25.61	\$30.70

Notes: 1) For this model, the sole provider is working full-time (2080 hours/ year). 2) For two adult families where one adult is not in the labor force, one of the adults is employed full-time while the other non-wage-earning adult provides full-time childcare for the family's children. Source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2023

## EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### CHILD CARE

- Archuleta County has 5 licensed child care centers with capacity for 183 children (ages birth-12). Four centers (capacity for 167 children) accept financial assistance via the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). There is no center-based infant care and only 32 toddler slots in the county.
- There are four Family Child Care (FCC) Homes with a total capacity for 38 children (birth – 12); of these, only one FCC Home with 12 slots accepts financial assistance.
- Town Of Pagosa Springs Ross Aragon Community is a licensed school age facility with a capacity of 100 school-age children.

**Licensed Age 0-5 Child Care/Head Start Centers, Archuleta County—Pagosa Springs**

Child Care Center	Capacity	Serves Infants	Serves Toddlers	Serves Preschool	QRIS Level	Accepts CCAP
Our Savior Lutheran School PreK	38			X	1	Yes
Pagosa Springs Head Start	40		X	X	4	Yes
Pagosa Springs Elementary Head Start*	16			X	1	No
Seeds of Learning	45			X	4	Yes
Wings Early Childhood Center	44		X	X	2	Yes
<b>Total Children Ages</b>	<b>183 plus 100 school age slots =283</b>					

\*Preschool Source: Colorado Shines

**Colorado Shines** is a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) that monitors and supports increased quality of early learning programs through assessment, training and tools, and to connect families with quality childcare (rated on a scale of 1 to 5). Two centers are rated 4, two centers are rated 2, and one center is rated 1. Of FCC homes, three have a quality rating of 1 and one FCC home has a rating of 2.<sup>17</sup>

### Cost of Child Care

The annual price of center-based infant care in Colorado is \$19,573 ranking the state as the third least affordable for center-based infant care. Center-based toddler care is \$16,307, ranking Colorado as the fourth least affordable state. Infant/toddler FCC care is \$12,750, ranking the state as the fifth least affordable for infant/toddler FCC care. Center-based preschool care is \$13,809, ranking Colorado as the fifth least affordable state for preschool care. Before and after school care averages \$7,736. Families receiving a subsidy can pay between \$1 and \$584 per month for one child in care. A two-parent household spends 12% of their income on child care, while the Department of Health and Human Services defines spending over 7% to be a burden.<sup>18</sup>

Infant	Toddler	4-Year-Old	Before/After School
\$19,573	\$16,307	\$13,809	\$7,736

Families may be eligible for CCCAP if they reside in Colorado; are working, seeking employment, or are participating in training/education; have at least one child under 13 years old; and have a family income of less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level in Archuleta County. View the [Family Income Guidelines for CCCAP eligibility](#).<sup>19</sup>

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## UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN

The passage of HB22-1295 established the Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) and the Universal Preschool Program (UPK) which was launched July 1, 2023; this brought the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) to its end. Colorado families can now receive at least 15 hours per week of free, voluntary preschool for 4-year-olds through the UPK program. Three-year-olds with qualifying factors (i.e., - Individualized Education Program, homelessness, dual language learner, foster/kinship care) are eligible for 10 free hours per week. Any child in the year before they are eligible for kindergarten who is low income (household income below 270% of the 2023 federal poverty guidelines) AND has a qualifying factor is eligible for additional hours of free preschool, pending eligibility confirmation.

Recently, Colorado’s Department of Early Childhood proposed a new qualifying factor to take effect during SY 2024-2025 to make sure the most vulnerable children and families who need access to high-quality preschool are equitably served. By establishing a new qualifying factor for children “living in poverty” (at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines), this rule change would expand the eligibility of children in poverty to receive 30 hours of free, high-quality preschool across the state.<sup>20</sup>

The UPK Colorado program allows families to choose the right setting for their child from licensed and registered community-based, school-based, and home-based providers. Following are UPK Providers in Archuleta County:<sup>21</sup>

**Universal PreK Providers, Archuleta County—Pagosa Springs**

Program	Program Options	Hours	CCAP Available
Archuleta County School District No. 50-JT	Not Available	Not Available	N/A
Pagosa Springs Head Start	4-Year-Old - Part-Time	M – TH: 8 AM – 3 PM	Yes
Seeds of Learning	4-Year-Old Full Day 4-Year-Old Extended Day	M-F: 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM	Yes
Wings Early Childhood Center	Not Available	M-F: 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM	Yes

Source: Colorado Department of Early Childhood

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## HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Children from birth to age five who are from families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Guidelines are eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) services. Children from homeless families, and families receiving public assistance such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are also eligible. Foster children are eligible regardless of their foster family’s income.

Durango 4-C Council is the grant recipient for Archuleta County with two locations in Pagosa Springs. The program has a funded enrollment of 48 Head Start children, ages 3-5 years of age and not eligible for kindergarten and Early Head Start enrollment for 8 toddlers.



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## HOME VISITING

“Studies show that maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting can be effective at improving maternal and child outcomes and yielding strong returns on investment for states and communities. Voluntary home visiting strengthens families with young children by meeting with families in their homes and directly providing or connecting families with health, mental health, parenting, and other supports and services, depending on each family’s unique needs.”<sup>22</sup>

Colorado supports seven home visiting models: Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY), Parents as Teachers (PAT), Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), SafeCare Colorado, HealthySteps, Healthy Families America (HFA) and Early Head Start (EHS) Home Based Option. According to the 2020 Colorado Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program Needs Assessment:<sup>23</sup>

- 23 Colorado counties were identified as having high risk concentrations.
- 22 Colorado counties were identified as having moderate risk concentrations including Archuleta County due to high pre-term births. While the Black and African American community in Colorado is at high risk, this community is at a moderate risk in Archuleta County due to population density.

As cited by Colorado’s Child Fatality Prevention System’s 2020 Annual Legislative Report, “not a single county in Colorado...has home visiting programs to meet the overall needs of families in the county.”<sup>24</sup> Following are Home Visitation Programs in Archuleta County:<sup>25</sup>

### Home Visiting Programs, Archuleta County

Program	Home Visiting Model	Eligible Participants
<a href="#">Archuleta County Public Health Department</a>	Nurse Family Partnership	First time expecting mothers from early pregnancy until the infant is 2 years of age. Serves Archuleta and La Plata counties.
<a href="#">San Juan Basin Public Health Department</a>	SafeCare Colorado	Families with their children ages five and under. Trained Parent Support Providers deliver weekly services to families for an average of four to six months. Serves Archuleta and La Plata counties.

Source: Colorado Home Visiting Coalition

## BIRTH OUTCOMES

- In 2022, there were 94 live births in Archuleta County, compared to 120 births in 2019 (-21.7%).
- In 2022, 91.5% of births in Archuleta County were to women aged 20 and over. Six percent of births were to women aged 18-19.
- In 2022, 34% of expectant mothers in Archuleta County received prenatal care after the first trimester; this was the highest rate in five years and nearly double the rate of Colorado (17.6%).
- In 2022, 18.1% of births in Archuleta County were to mothers with less than a high school diploma or GED, nearly double the rate of Colorado (9.8%).
- In 2022, the rate of births in Archuleta County with a low birth weight (under 5.5 lbs.) was 7.4%; this was the lowest rate in five years and lower than Colorado (9.9%).

### Birth Characteristics, 2022<sup>27</sup>

Birth Characteristic	Archuleta County		Colorado	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Live Births</b>	94	100.0%	62,356	100.0%
<b>Age of Mother</b>				
10-17	*	*	495	0.8%
18-19	6	6.4%	1,525	2.4%
20-29	35	37.2%	25,732	41.3%
30+	51	54.3%	34,592	55.5%
<b>Race/Ethnicity of Mother</b>				
White, non-Hispanic (NH)	65	72.2%	34,722	56.7%
Black/African American, NH	0	0.0%	2,931	4.8%
Asian Alone, NH	*	*	2,452	4.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, NH	0	0.0%	198	0.3%
Native American/Alaskan Native, NH	0	0.0%	322	0.5%
Two-or-More Races, NH	*	*	1,688	2.8%
Hispanic, All Races	22	24.4%	18,941	30.9%
Unknown	4		1,102	
<b>Low Weight Births (&lt;2,500 Grams)</b>	7	7.4%	6,158	9.9%
<b>Prenatal Care Later than 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester</b>	32	34.0%	10,655	17.6%
No Prenatal Care	0	0.0%	1,164	1.9%
<b>Preterm Births (&lt;37 Weeks)</b>	8	8.5%	6,253	10.0%
<b>Mother's Education &lt;HS Diploma/G.E.D.</b>	17	18.1%	6,032	9.8%
<b>Live Births to Unmarried Women</b>	26	27.7%	14,546	23.4%
<b>Smoking During Pregnancy</b>	4	4.3%	1,957	3.1%

\*Percentage cannot be calculated Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

### 5-Year Birth Characteristics, Archuleta County<sup>26</sup>

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Live Births</b>	120	95	116	109	94
<b>Low Weight Birth Rate</b>	8.3%	9.5%	9.5%	8.3%	7.4%
<b>Prenatal Care Later than 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester/No Care</b>	31.6%	31.5%	24.8%	32.7%	34.0%
<b>Births to Unmarried Women</b>	36.7%	23.2%	28.4%	29.4%	27.7%
<b>Infant Deaths</b>	0	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

## DISABILITIES

### Birth – Age Three

Child Find is part of Colorado's system for identifying children suspected of having a delay in development. Community Connections is the Early Intervention provider in Archuleta counties, providing Part C services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). In 2021, Community Connections served 65 infants/toddlers in Archuleta County and four surrounding counties; this represented 1.9% of infants and toddlers ages birth to one with IFSPs in Colorado and 4.6% of infants and toddlers birth to age 3 with IFSPs in Colorado.<sup>28</sup>

### Pre-K

Colorado Local Education Agencies (LEAs) provide Part B services under IDEA to students ages 3 through 21. San Juan Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) covers Archuleta County, but also nearby counties.

### Grades K-12

In 2022, 10.3% of Archuleta County School District K-12 students received special education services, compared to 12.4% in the state of Colorado.<sup>29</sup>

## POVERTY

- Of 559 children under 5 years old, 5% (28 children) in Archuleta County are estimated to be living in poverty, compared to 11.9% in Colorado.
- Of 2,368 children under 18 years old, 8.4% (199 children) in Archuleta County are estimated to be living in poverty, compared to 11.3% in Colorado.
- Of 128 children under age five in Pagosa Springs, 21.1% or 27 children are living in poverty.
- Of 473 children under age 18 in Pagosa Springs, 123 or 26% are living in poverty.<sup>30</sup>
- Of children under 18 in Archuleta County,

### Children under Five in Poverty (Estimates), Archuleta County

Children Under 5	Population Under 5 in Poverty	Infants and Toddlers*	Infants and Toddlers in Poverty	3- and 4-Year Olds*	3 and 4 Year Olds in Poverty
559	28 (5.0%)	335	17	224	11

\*Based on estimated breakdown by age in 0-4 age group: infants/toddlers (60%); 3- and 4-Year-olds (40%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2022 Five-Year Estimates

### Children Under Age 6 By Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Thresholds

Under 50% FPL (Deep Poverty)		100-124% of FPL		125-149% of FPL		150-175% of FPL	
Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
10	1.4%	28	3.8%	176	24.1%	39	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, B17024, American Community, 2022 Five-Year Estimates

### K-12 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch

Public school children qualify for free lunches if their family's income is less than 130% of the federal poverty level and they qualify for reduced price lunches if their family's income is less than 185% of the federal poverty level. Of public school students, 50.5% in Archuleta County were eligible for free or reduced lunch during 2022, compared to 40.3% in Colorado.<sup>31</sup>

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH

### FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity refers to the USDA's measure of lack of access to a sufficient amount of food for an active, healthy life for all household members, and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. According to Feeding America, "Food insecurity can cause serious health issues when families have to choose between spending money on food or on medicine and healthcare, as well as choosing between food and rent, bills, and transportation. Further, food insecurity can make it more difficult for a child to properly learn and develop."<sup>32</sup>

In 2021, an estimated 13.8% of children or 330 children under 18 years old in Archuleta County were food insecure, higher than the Colorado child food insecurity rate of 13.8%. Massive public/private response to hunger during the pandemic was successful in mitigating food insecurity rates across the country. Between 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 2021, child food insecurity decreased by .5% in Archuleta County. While food insecurity improved for some sub-populations, there was a deepening divide across racial and ethnic lines. In 2021, 10.3% of Archuleta County's general population and 8% of the non-Hispanic White population was insecure; however, 17% of the Hispanic population was food insecure. Data for other races is unavailable.<sup>33</sup>

#### Child (<18 Years) Food Insecurity

Location	2019	2020	2021
Colorado	12.1%	11.2%	10.5%
Archuleta County	13.3%	15.4%	13.8%

Source: Feeding America

#### Overall Food Insecurity by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

Location	Overall Population	Black (All Ethnicities)	Latino/Hispanic	White (Non-Hispanic)
Colorado	9.2%	14.0%	16.0%	6.0%
Archuleta County	10.3%	Not Available	17.0%	8.0%

"Overall" refers to all individuals, including children, regardless of race or ethnicity. Information unavailable for other races and ethnicities. Source: Feeding America, 2021

## OBESITY

Conditions in which children live, learn, and play are social determinants of health (SDOH). SDOH differences affect obesity among racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups as well as in different geographies and among people with different physical abilities. SDOH include educational environments, neighborhood design, access to healthy and affordable foods, and access to safe and convenient places for physical activity.<sup>34</sup>

**WIC Children with Obesity or High Weight-For-Length, Colorado**

Age	2010	2020	2020				
			Hispanic	NH White	NH Black	AIAN	API
<b>3-23 months</b>	8.1%	6.3%	7.0%	5.1%	6.2%	7.3%	4.5%
<b>24-48 months</b>	9.6%	8.6%	10.8%	5.6%	6.9%	8.4%	6.0%

NH=Non-Hispanic, AIAN=American Indian/Alaskan Native, API=Asian Pacific Islander Source: Centers for Disease Control

### Infants<sup>35</sup>

Infants aged 3-23 months with high weight-for-length are at increased risk of obesity in childhood and early adulthood. Between 2010 and 2020, Colorado reported a rate drop in high weight-for-length from 8.1% to 6.3%. High weight-for-length is most prevalent among AIAN (7.3%) and Hispanic (7%) infants.

### Ages 2 to 4<sup>36</sup>

Colorado children ages 2 to 4 enrolled in WIC have 8.6% obesity, a slight decrease from 9.6% in 2010. Obesity prevalence among children ages 2-4 is highest among the Hispanic population (10.8%).

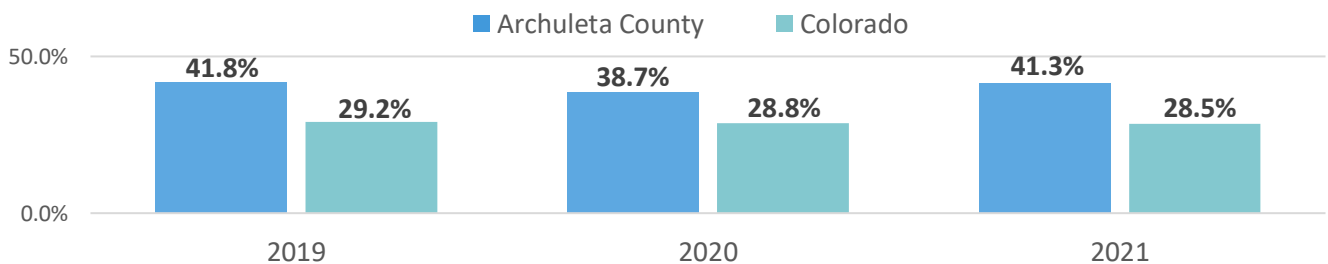
## WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

WIC (Women, Infants and Children) is a supplemental nutrition program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered locally by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The program provides education on building positive eating habits and improving health. Participants use an eWIC card to purchase WIC approved foods at authorized grocery stores. Eligible recipients must be residents of Colorado, be pregnant or breastfeeding, and/or have a child younger than 5 years and a gross household income not exceeding [185% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines](#).

In 2021, 41.3% or 244 children under the age of five received WIC in Archuleta County.<sup>37</sup>

**Children Under Age 5 Enrolled in WIC**

Source: Governor's Office of Information Technology



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## HEALTH INSURANCE

Of children aged 0-18, 9.9% or 251 children in Archuleta County are estimated to have no health insurance, compared to 5.4% of children in Colorado.<sup>38</sup>

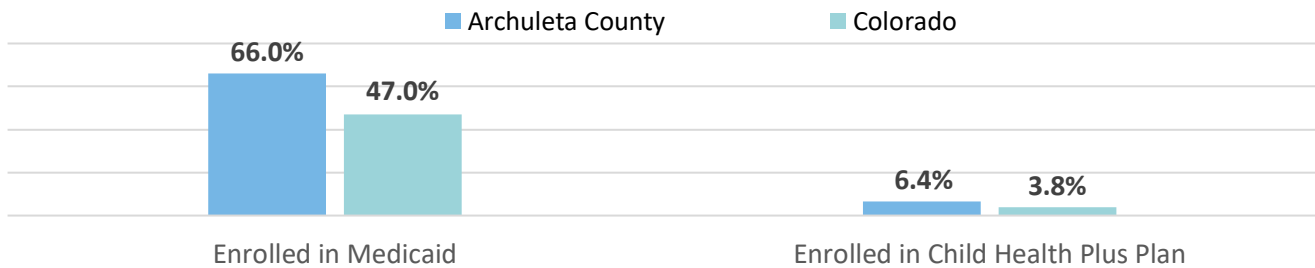
*Health First Colorado*, Colorado's Medicaid program, is public health insurance for those who qualify. Health First Colorado provides no-cost health coverage to eligible children and expectant mothers for routine check-ups, immunizations, and dental care to keep them healthy.

Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) is public low-cost health insurance for children and expectant women who earn too much to qualify for Health First Colorado, but not enough to pay for private health insurance.<sup>39</sup>

Of children aged 18 and under in 2021, 66% or 1,701 children in Archuleta County were enrolled in Medicaid, greater than the 47% of enrolled children in Colorado. Of children aged 18 and under, 6.4% or 168 children in Archuleta County were enrolled in Child Health Plus Plan, compared to 3.8% of enrolled children in Colorado.<sup>40</sup>

### Children (18 Years and Under) Enrolled in Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus

Source: Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Finance





## HOMELESSNESS

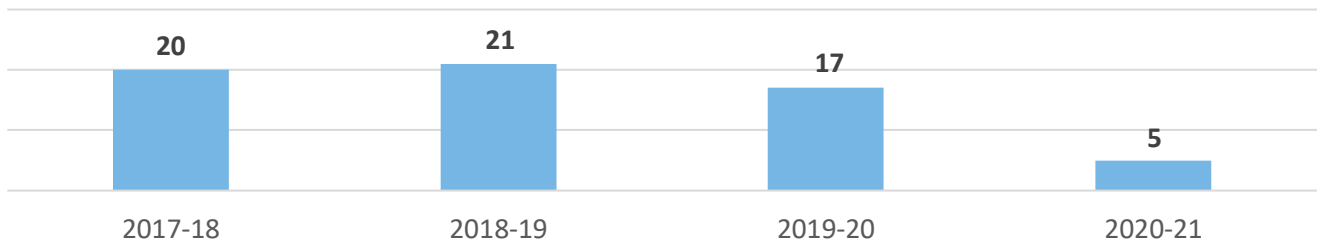
The McKinney-Vento Act provides rights and services to children and youth experiencing homelessness, including those who are lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence:

- sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- living in motels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to the lack of an adequate alternative;
- staying in shelters or transitional housing;
- or sleeping in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar settings.

During School Year 2020-21, five Archuleta County public school students in grades K-12 were identified as experiencing homelessness; this data was likely impacted by virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. In each of the prior three years (2018-2020), between 17 and 21 children were identified as experiencing homelessness.<sup>41</sup>

### Reported Public School Students Experiencing Homelessness

Source: Colorado Department of Education



## COLORADO MEASURES OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS (CMAS)

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success, or CMAS, is the state summative assessment for language arts, math, science, and social studies. Students in grades 3-8 are tested in English Language Arts and Math. CMAS is aligned to the state's rigorous academic standards and used to gauge how well students are mastering the standards and are prepared for their next grade.

Between 2022 and 2023, scores for Archuleta County School District 3<sup>rd</sup> graders increased by 8.7% in English Language Arts and decreased by 1.3% in Math. Archuleta County's 3<sup>rd</sup> grader 2023 scores were 5.8% lower in English Language Arts than Colorado and 13% lower in Math than Colorado.<sup>42</sup>

### Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

#### Meeting or Exceeding Expectations<sup>43</sup>

District	English Language Arts (3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade)		Math (3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade)	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Colorado	40.7%	39.9%	39.4%	40.4%
Archuleta County School District	25.4%	34.1%	28.7%	27.4%

Source: Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

# GRADES K - 12

## School Year 2022-23 Enrollment

Category	State Total	Archuleta County 50 Jt
Pre K	32,189	0
Half Day K	1,333	3
Full Day K	58,365	111
1st Grade	63,350	124
2nd Grade	61,030	106
3rd Grade	62,564	139
4th Grade	62,455	132
5th Grade	63,030	115
6th Grade	64,303	133
7th Grade	65,255	153
8th Grade	67,474	141
9th Grade	71,605	135
10th Grade	70,567	146
11th Grade	67,901	125
12th Grade	71,512	115

Category	STATE	Archuleta County 50 Jt
American Indian or Alaskan Native Female	2,735	56
American Indian or Alaskan Native Male	2,740	54
Asian Female	14,377	5
Asian Male	14,263	4
Black or African American Female	19,623	3
Black or African American Male	20,575	10
Hispanic or Latino Female	151,165	287
Hispanic or Latino Male	157,574	315
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander Female	1,293	2
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander Male	1,364	0
Two or more races Female	22,168	22
Two or more races Male	22,874	26
White Female	218,608	438
White Male	233,905	456

## Grades K-12 Data

Indicator	Archuleta County 50 JT	Colorado
<b>Student Enrollment</b>		
2022-23	1,678	882,933
2021-22	1,712	886,517
2020-21	1,599	883,199
2019-20	1,742	913,223
<b>Home Schooling Enrollment<sup>44</sup></b>		
2022-23	39	26,706
2021-22	36	-----
2020-21	46	-----
2019-20	21	7,880
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Chronic Absenteeism (SY 22-23)	39.8%	31.1%
Free and Reduced Lunch	50.5%	40.3%
Drop-out Rate	1.0%	2.2%

Source: Colorado Department of Education

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDER SURVEY

As part of the Early Childhood Assessment process, a survey was distributed to Early Childhood Providers in Archuleta County. Thank you very much to those four providers who participated. (Fall 2023)

### 1. What type of provider best describes you?

Type of Provider	Percent of Respondents
Child Care Center	50.0%
Family Child Care	25.0%
Head Start/Early Head Start	25.0%
Universal Pre-K	0.0%
Home Visitation (pregnant mothers, children 0-5)	0.0%
Other	25.0%

**Note:** One child care center also serves as a Universal Pre-K site.

### 2. Indicate the age group(s) that your program serves. (Select all that apply.)

Age Group	Number of Providers	Percent of Respondents
Infants	1	25.0%
Toddlers	3	75.0%
Preschool	4	100.0%
School-Age	1	25.0%
Other	1	25.0%

**Note:** Wings Early Childhood Center plans to soon serve infants.

### 3. How many total enrollment slots do you have for infants?

Total Infant Slots	Number of Infant Providers	Percent of Respondents
2	1	25%

**Note:** Two infants are currently served in the Family Child Care Home option only.

### 4. How many total enrollment slots do you have for toddlers?

Total Toddler Slots	Number of Toddler Providers	Percent of Respondents
36	3	75%

**Note:** Early Head Start (8), FCC Home (4), Wings Early Childhood Center (24)

**5. How many total enrollment slots do you have for preschoolers?**

Total Preschool Slots	Number of Preschool Providers	Percent of Respondents
111	4	100%

**Note:** Head Start (48), FCC Home (2), Wings Early Childhood Center (16), Seeds of Learning (45)

**6. How many school-age slots do you currently have?**

Total Enrollment	Number of Providers	Percent of Respondents
0	0	0.0%

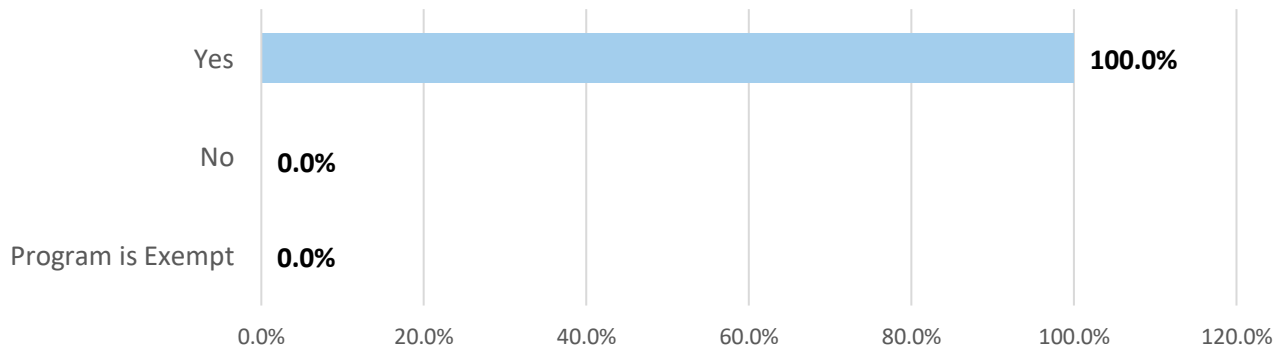
**Note:** While the FCC Home serves school-agers, it does not currently have open school-age slots.

**7. How many total staff do you employ?**

Total Staff	Number of Providers	Percent of Respondents
44	3	75.0%

**Note:** The FCC Home does not have employees.

**8. Is your program licensed by the state of Colorado?**



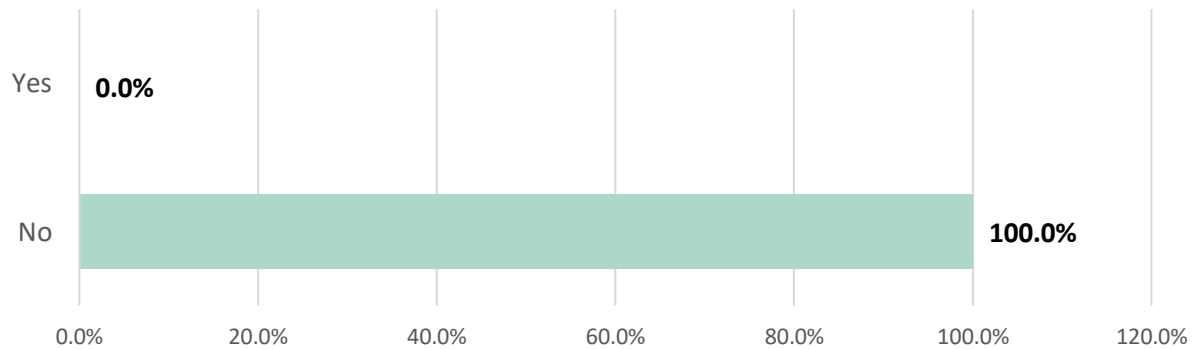
**9. What times of day/year do you provide child care services? (Choose ALL that apply.)**

Hours and Days of Operation	Number of Providers	Percent of Respondents
Weekdays	4	100.0%
Evenings	0	0.0%
Weekends	0	0.0%
After School Care	0	0.0%
School Year Only	1	25%
Full Year, Including Summer	3	75.0%
Other	0	0.0%

**10. Please note the top 3 issues with which your program is struggling. (Choose up to 3.)**

	Percent of Respondents
Finding potential staff who meet all position qualifications	50.0%
Being able to offer a high enough salary to attract new staff	0.0%
Retaining staff	0.0%
Paying staff or paying myself as a sole provider	0.0%
Providing benefits for staff or myself as a sole provider	0.0%
Reduced federal or state funding	0.0%
Maintaining full child enrollment	25.0%
Needing to raise child care rates to meet increased expenses	25.0%
Having bilingual staff to communicate with children and families	25.0%
Paying for mortgage, facility repairs, or needed equipment	0.0%
Providing sufficient infant/toddler slots to meet community demand	25.0%
Providing sufficient preschool slots to meet community demand	50.0%
Providing sufficient school-age slots to meet community demand	0.0%
Providing enough hours of care for working families.	0.0%
Other (please specify) <i>No Issues</i>	25.0%

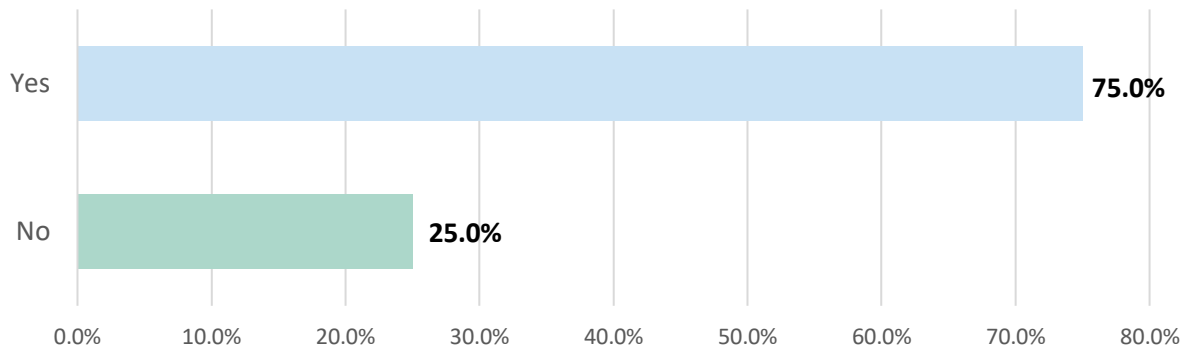
**11. In the past two years, have you reduced your enrollment?**



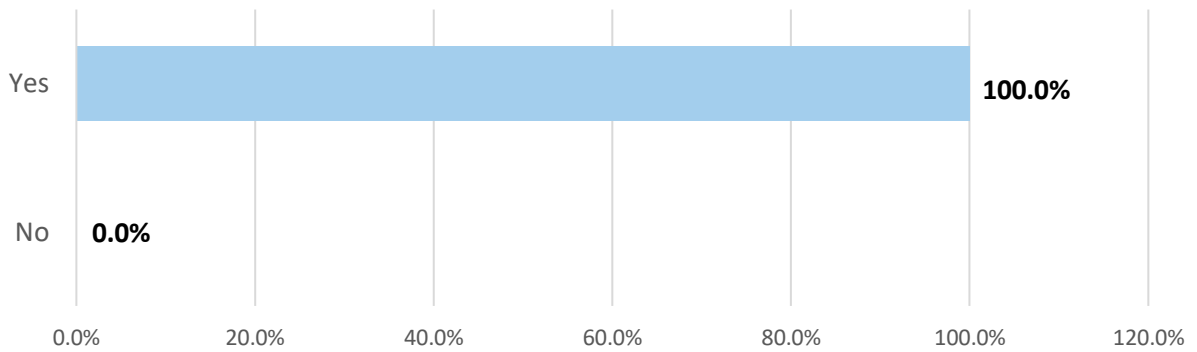
**12. Please indicate your highest level in the Colorado Shines Quality Rating Information System (QRIS).**

Hours and Days of Operation	Number of Providers	Percent of Respondents
Level 5	0	0.0%
Level 4	1	25.0%
Level 3	0	0.0%
Level 2	2	50.0%
Level 1	1	25.0%
Not a Participant in CO Shines	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%

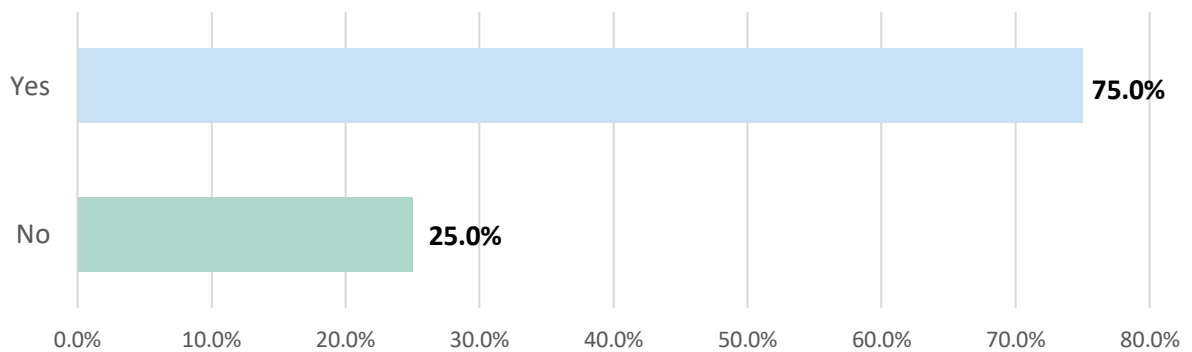
**13. Do you currently accept child care subsidies from the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)?**



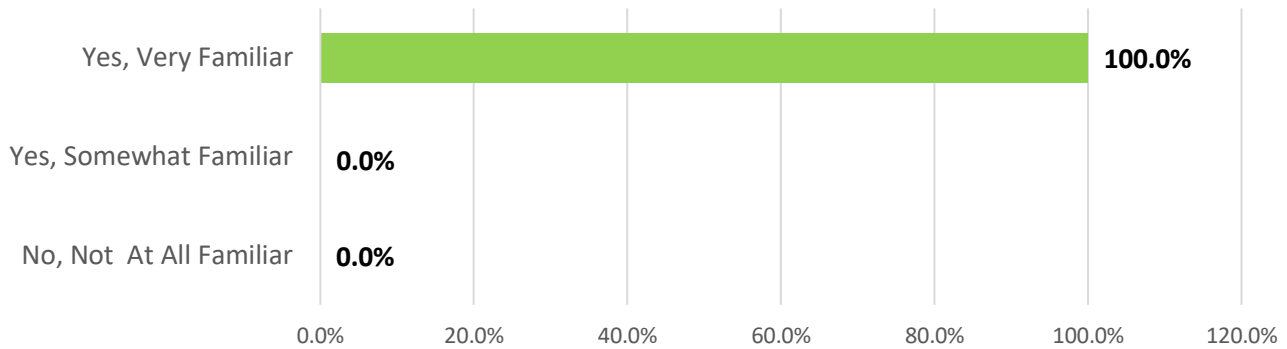
**14. Do you currently receive meal reimbursements via the federal Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) which is facilitated by the Colorado Department of Health?**



**15. Do you currently offer a sliding fee scale or a scholarship to lower-income families that do not qualify for CCCAP?**



**16. Are you familiar with the Archuleta Early Childhood Council?**



**17. Please choose the response that BEST describes your current relationship with our organization.**

	Percent of Respondents
<b>Collaboration:</b> Formal and interdependent system of working together for a common purpose; decision making is shared; roles and responsibilities are formalized.	25.0%
<b>Partnership:</b> Actively working together, (and possibly with another organization) toward one or more common community goals, which each member maintains an individual organizational agenda.	50.0%
<b>Networking:</b> Engaged in informal ways such as community meetings, events and/or referrals for the common purpose of community action.	25.0%
<b>None:</b> Would like to explore and develop a relationship.	0.0%
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	0.0%

**18. What professional development or training topics do your staff most request or need? (List between 1-3 topics.)**

- Classroom Management/Positive Guidance Strategies (2)
- Managing Stress, Burnout/Self Care (3)
- Child Growth and Development
- Literacy
- Support Children with Challenging Behaviors
- Healthy Boundaries with parents
- Positive and Engaging Transitions
- Math

**19. Please share what specific support from the Archuleta Early Childhood Council is most important to your program at this time:**

- Mental Health Specialist
- We would love an Archuleta County mental health consultant!



## REFERENCES

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- <sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2022 Dec). ACS 2021 Five-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>
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