



**FY 25/26**

# **SERVICE SNAPSHOT**



# INTRODUCTION

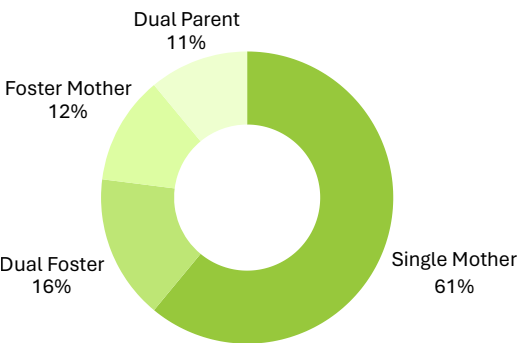
We are pleased to share Children Today’s **2025–2026 Service Snapshot**, a look at the children and families we served and the work we undertook together to foster stability and success. Throughout the year, our trauma-informed, healing-centered approach remained rooted in a simple but powerful belief: children thrive when they feel safe, known, supported, and connected to the people around them. For families facing homelessness, involvement with the child welfare system, or other significant challenges, that foundation can make an important difference—not only in a child’s development, but in a family’s ability to move toward greater stability.

The pages that follow offer a snapshot of the many ways Children Today puts that belief into practice. You’ll see who we served, the needs families brought to us, the developmental progress of the children in our care, and the services and resources we provided in partnership with others. You’ll also see the many contributions of our staff, community partners, and supporters who help make this work possible. Taken together, the information within these pages tells a larger story: one of children building skills and confidence, families finding support when they need it, and a community coming together to help children and families thrive.

# WHO WE SERVED

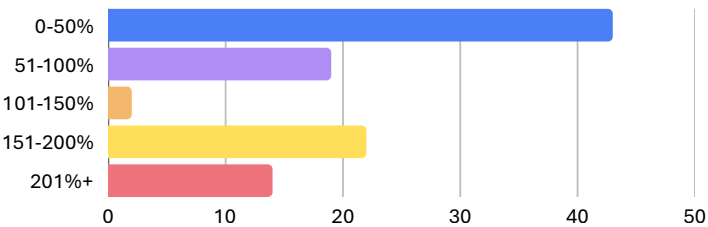
Children Today provides trauma-informed child development, preschool, and support services to children and families who are facing homelessness or who are involved in the child welfare system due to abuse or neglect. **For FY 2025-2026, we served a total of 58 households.**

## HOUSEHOLD TYPE



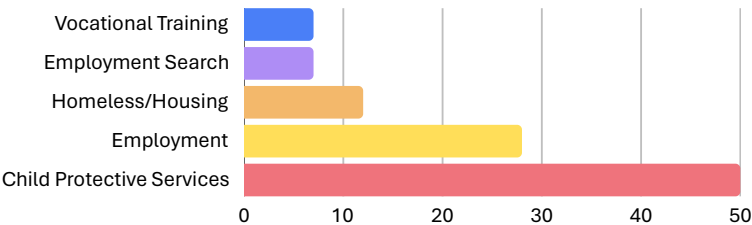
Household types varied, with the highest percentage of households headed by single mothers (61%), and the lowest percentage headed by dual parents (11%).

## POVERTY LINE



62% of households subsisted under the federal poverty level, which for a family of three is \$27,320 in 2026. By contrast, a living wage in Long Beach, meaning a satisfactory standard of living, is \$142,292 for a household with one adult and two children.

## NEED FOR SERVICES



Households had a variety of reasons for needing care. The most prevalent (50%) need was that child care or preschool services were part of a Child Protective Services (CPS) plan. Employment (28%) was the second highest need for households.

## CHILD CARE AND PRESCHOOL SERVICES

Children Today operates EcoHouse, a child development facility providing trauma-informed care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, along with comprehensive support services for their families. Our classrooms have the capacity to serve nine infants, 16 toddlers, and 32 preschoolers daily.

**In FY 25/26, we provided 8,126 days of full-time child care and preschool services to 75 children.**

Low adult-child ratios allow specially trained teachers to provide individualized attention and tailor interactions to each child's developmental needs, strengths, and family and cultural background. Teachers regularly assess children's development using the California Department of Education's Desired Results Developmental Profile and develop individualized curricula to support developmental milestones.

## NUTRITION

We know that a healthy, balanced diet is a critical component of every child's growth and development. We also know that many of the families we work with have experienced periods of privation as a result of limited income, or because they live in neighborhoods that are resource poor (food deserts), or because living in shelters or shared housing spaces limits their ability to prepare meals for themselves.

That's why we take pride in preparing highly-quality, scratch-made meals for children to enjoy. We also make sure that families who wish to can take food home with them at the end of the day.

**Children Today's kitchen served 22,183 meals and snacks to the children in our care in FY 25/26 at an estimated cost of \$4.44 in groceries per child per day.**



## ENHANCED FAMILY SUPPORT

Beyond providing high-quality early care and education, Children Today works to ensure that children with physical, developmental, behavioral, or other concerns receive the services and support they need to thrive. We provide families with enhanced referral and advocacy support and collaborate with program partners and community organizations to help children access timely assessments, interventions, and specialized services.

In FY 2025–2026, 20 children received referrals for additional services or supports, with 90% completed or in progress. Additionally, 23 children received 232 instances of onsite mental health, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy services. All services were provided at no cost to families, with some services funded directly by Children Today. Through these partnerships and supports, we help reduce barriers to care and ensure that children receive the individualized support they need during their early years.

The infographic below shows the most prevalent needs and the most often used service providers.

### NEEDS



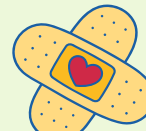
**Speech/Language**  
26.5%



**Developmental**  
23.5%



**Behavioral/Emotional**  
23.5%



**Medical/Physical**  
26.5%

### SERVICES



**Regional Centers**  
31%



**Mental Health Organizations**  
25%



**School Districts**  
11%



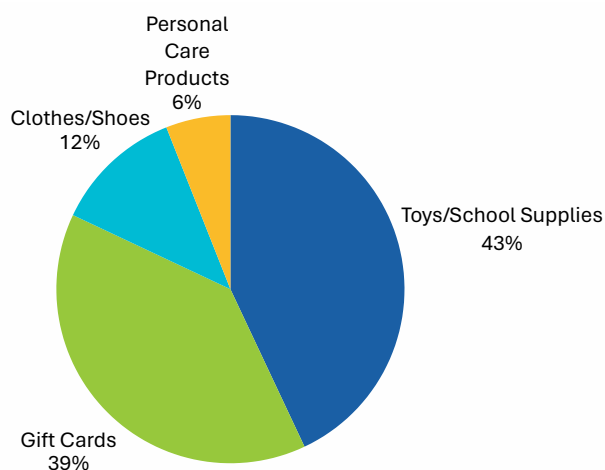
**Healthcare Providers**  
14%



**Early Interventionists**  
19%

Besides the enhanced referral and advocacy Children Today staff undertake to promote family stability, we engage our community partners and supporters in order to distribute donations to families to help meet their basic needs.

In 2025-2026, we distributed over **\$50,000** in gift cards, clothes, shoes, toys, and personal care products.



## EARLY INTERVENTION: IN PARTNERSHIP

There is a moment that happens countless times each day at Children Today.

A teacher notices something.

Maybe a toddler isn't using words as often as expected. Maybe a preschooler is having a harder time managing frustration. Maybe a child who has always loved climbing suddenly seems hesitant to use one side of their body.

Sometimes the difference is obvious. More often, it is not. Our teachers spend their days getting to know each child well enough to notice small but meaningful changes in how they communicate, move, play, interact with others, solve problems, regulate their emotions, and respond to the world around them.

**Early intervention starts with noticing.  
But noticing is only the beginning.**

At Children Today, teachers don't diagnose children. That's not their role, and it isn't what we want them to do. Rather, their role is to know the children in their care deeply, to understand child development, and to recognize when a child might benefit from additional support.

When a concern emerges, the first step is often a conversation—with colleagues, with the child's family, or both. Together, they can consider what the teacher has observed, what the family is seeing at home, and whether additional information or assessment might be helpful. This process depends on trust.

Families need to know that a conversation about their child's development isn't a judgment about their parenting or a label being placed on their child. Rather, it is an invitation to work together on behalf of a child. And because Children Today serves families who may already be navigating housing insecurity, child welfare involvement, or other significant challenges, we recognize that adding another appointment, another provider, or another system to navigate can feel overwhelming.



That's why our work doesn't end with a referral. We provide families with enhanced referral and advocacy support, helping them navigate the process of connecting with appropriate services. We work with community partners to facilitate timely assessments and interventions, and whenever possible, we bring services directly into our program. This makes it easier for children to receive support in a familiar environment and reduces some of the barriers families face in accessing care.

And that care is aimed at helping children meaningfully participate in the world around them. A child who receives speech therapy may find it easier to communicate with friends and teachers. A child receiving occupational therapy may gain skills that make everyday activities more manageable. Physical therapy can help a child develop strength, coordination, or mobility. Mental health support can help children—and the adults caring for them—better understand and respond to big emotions, stress, and experiences that may be difficult to express in words.

Child care centers are natural hubs for this kind of interconnected work. Good early care and education programs are uniquely positioned to bring people together because they build trusting relationships with children, families, and community partners who help meet their needs.

Our teachers bring expertise in child development and a deep knowledge of each child in the classroom. Specialists bring clinical expertise in speech, physical development, occupational therapy, mental health, and other areas.

**But families bring something no one else can: the daily, lived understanding of their child—what comforts them, what motivates them, what worries them, what helps them feel safe, and what allows them to thrive.**



Early intervention is strongest when families are not simply included in the process but recognized as essential partners in shaping it. Our job is to bring these pieces together in a way that honors each child's whole life: their development, their relationships, their routines, and the people who know and love them best.

## CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Children Today uses the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), an assessment tool that helps teachers observe, document, and understand children's learning and development over time. It provides a framework for recognizing children's strengths, identifying areas where additional support may be helpful, and planning experiences that support continued growth.

The DRDP considers development across eight domains: **Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Foundational Language Development; English Language Development** (for English language learners only); **Math; Cognition/Science; Physical Development;** and **Health**. Together, these domains offer a broad view of how children communicate, think, relate to others, move, explore, and express themselves.

### Developmental Continuum

|                       |                     |                      |                    |                     |                    |                   |                        |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Responding<br>Earlier | Responding<br>Later | Exploring<br>Earlier | Exploring<br>Later | Building<br>Earlier | Building<br>Middle | Building<br>Later | Integrating<br>Earlier | Integrating<br>Middle | Integrating<br>Later |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|

Within each domain, the DRDP describes a developmental continuum through four levels: **Responding, Exploring, Building,** and **Integrating**. The **Earlier, Middle,** and **Later** sublevels provide additional detail about children's developing skills and abilities. The continuum describes increasingly complex ways children demonstrate what they know and can do—from early responses and exploration to combining skills and strategies in more complex activities. Teachers use observations to identify where a child is demonstrating skills on each measure and to plan responsive support.

### Approaches to Learning

This domain emphasizes the observable knowledge, skills, and behaviors that support young children's school readiness and long-term success. Measures within this domain include engagement, attention and persistence; curiosity; interest and initiative; problem-solving; and planning.



One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Engagement, Attention, and Persistence** - defined as *the child's increasing ability to engage by sustaining attention, contributing, and persisting, when appropriate, related to learning activities*.

For infants, this may look like this eight-month old exploring the colorful animals on this pop-up toy. While she pushes them open easily, she learns after several tries that she needs to use her whole hand to push them closed again.

## Social and Emotional Development

This domain focuses on children's growing ability to understand others, build positive relationships with adults and peers, and engage in social-emotional learning through self-identity, emotional understanding, social interactions, and symbolic or sociodramatic play.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Self Awareness** - defined as *the child showing increasing awareness of their own identity and preferences as distinct from and in relation to others.*

In the preschool classroom, children demonstrate self-awareness by drawing their self-portraits.



## Foundational Language Development

This domain focuses on observable language and literacy skills that support all children's development. This domain includes understanding and using language, shared communication, foundational literacy, alphabetics, print knowledge, and writing.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Foundational Literacy Skills** - defined as *an increasing ability to manipulate and combine components of language related to early literacy.*

Here, three-year-olds join teacher Laura in singing "Five Green and Speckled Frogs."



## Math

This domain is used to assess observable early math knowledge, skills, and behaviors across spatial thinking, classification, number and counting, number operations, and measurement.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Number and Counting** - defined as *the child showing developing understanding of number and quantity.*

This toddler is practicing counting colorful cereal with the teacher.



## Cognition/Science

This domain is used to assess observable skills in observation, exploration, and investigation through cause and effect, inquiry through observation and investigation, and documentation and communication of inquiry.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Documentation and Communication of Inquiry** - defined as *the child developing increasing capacity to describe, record, and communicate about their observations and investigations.*

Here, preschoolers engaged in a scavenger hunt are marking the items they've found in the classroom on their worksheets.



## Physical Development

This domain focuses on observable skills related to children's body movement, control, and interaction with objects, with or without adaptive equipment or supports. Its measures include perceptual-motor skills and movement concepts, gross locomotor movement skills, gross motor manipulative skills, and fine motor manipulative skills.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Perceptual-Motor Skills and Movement Concepts** - defined as *the child's growing body, spatial, and directional awareness through movement and environmental interactions.*

Here, preschoolers carefully navigate the narrow ledge of a rock-climbing wall.



## Health

This domain focuses on children's understanding of safety, health, wellness, and personal care routines. Measures include safety, understanding of health and wellness, hygiene, feeding, and self-dressing.

One measure teachers assess under this domain is **Personal Care Routines: Self-Dressing** - defined as *the child developing and refining the ability to participate and take responsibility for dressing his or herself.*

This toddler is practicing putting on his socks.



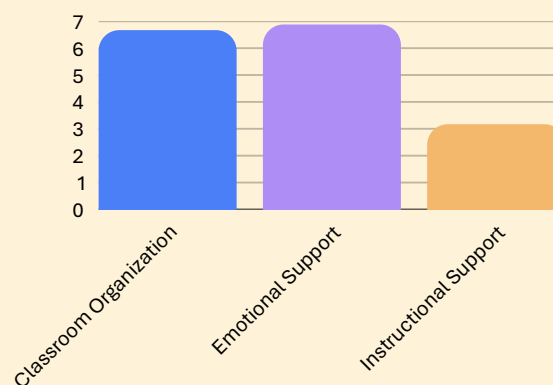
## CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS

Children Today uses two primary tools to assess classroom quality. **The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)** is used in our infant and toddler classrooms to evaluate how the environment supports children's learning, self-expression, and positive relationships. In our preschool classroom, we use the **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)**, an observation-based tool focused on the quality of teacher-child interactions and the support they provide for children's learning and development. The graphs below present our most recent assessment results for both tools.

### ITERS



### CLASS



For ITERS, scores of 5.0 or higher for the categories listed above indicate high quality. For CLASS, scores are organized in low (1-2), mid (3-5), and high (6-7) categories.

## PARENT SURVEYS

Anonymous parent surveys collect feedback regarding program satisfaction, how we help support children's learning and development, and how we help meet overall family needs. The survey conducted in April 2026 showed very high parent satisfaction.

### 100% of respondents strongly agreed that:

- The program makes them feel welcome and like a valued partner in their child's learning.
- The program provides developmentally appropriate learning activities that help their child's individual school readiness skills, such as math and literacy.
- The program provides their child with support in their social and emotional skills, such as how to play with friends and process emotions.

### 93.3% of respondents strongly agreed that:

- When needed, the program helps them get referrals to social and/or health services in their community, such as assessment to diagnose a disability, provide behavioral supports, or other referrals.

### 86.7% of respondents reported that:

- The program helped them get a job, keep a job, or attend school.



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