IOWA CHILD CARE CENTERS

Staff-to-child ratios at a glance

Iowa's ratios and maximum group sizes for licensed child care centers. Print it, pin it up by the door.

Group	Ages	Staff : children	Max group
Infants and toddlers	2 weeks to 2 years	**1 : 4**	**none**
Two-year-olds	2 years	**1 : 7**	**none**
Three-year-olds	3 years	**1 : 10**	**none**
Four-year-olds	4 years	**1 : 12**	**none**
Five to ten	5 years to 10 years	**1 : 15**	**none**
Ten and older	10 years and over	**1 : 20**	**none**

- **Mixed ages:** groups of children 4 and older may use the ratio for the age of the majority, and 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds together may use 1:12. Children 18 months to 3 years may be combined at the majority's ratio, but 1:7 is kept if any child is under 2.
- **Group size:** Iowa sets no statewide maximum. Each center's group sizes are set with the state fire marshal, and its maximum capacity is shown on its license.
- **Nap time:** at least one staff member must be in every room where children rest, and staffing may drop to one per room if full ratio coverage is kept in the center. The full ratio always applies to children under 2.

Source: Iowa Admin. Code r. 441—109.8(237A) (readopted effective July 1, 2025), read on November 24, 2026. This sheet is a summary, not legal advice: always check the current regulation and your licensing consultant.