SOUTH CAROLINA CHILD CARE CENTERS

Staff-to-child ratios at a glance

South Carolina'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	birth to 1 year	**1 : 5**	**none**
Toddlers	1 to 2 years	**1 : 6**	**none**
Two-year-olds	2 to 3 years	**1 : 8**	**none**
Three-year-olds	3 to 4 years	**1 : 12**	**none**
Four-year-olds	4 to 5 years	**1 : 17**	**none**
Five-year-olds	5 to 6 years	**1 : 20**	**none**
School age	6 to 12 years	**1 : 23**	**none**

- **Mixed ages:** if the group has any infant or toddler, the youngest child's ratio applies; otherwise the ratio for the age of most of the children applies.
- **Nap time:** while children nap and another staff member is readily available, ratios widen to 1:16 at age 2, 1:24 at age 3 and 1:34 at 4 and older; infants and toddlers stay at 1:5 and 1:6.
- **Swimming and water:** while children swim, wade or are near risky water, ratios are 1:1 under age 2, 1:2 at age 2, 1:3 at age 3, 1:6 at age 4 and 2:25 at 5 and older.
- A full rewrite of South Carolina's center regulations (Document 5314) was proposed in 2024 but withdrawn in May 2026 at the end of the legislative session; it may be filed again. Church-operated centers follow a separate set of regulations.

Source: S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 114-504(B) (amended effective June 22, 2018), read on November 24, 2026. This sheet is a summary, not legal advice: always check the current regulation and your licensing consultant.