WASHINGTON CHILD CARE CENTERS

Staff-to-child ratios at a glance

Washington'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 through 11 months	**1 : 4**	**8**
Toddlers	12 through 29 months	**1 : 7**	**14**
Preschoolers	30 months through 6 years, not yet in kindergarten	**1 : 10**	**20**
School age	5 through 12 years, in kindergarten or elementary school	**1 : 15**	**30**

- **Mixed ages:** age groups may be combined only for limited times, and the youngest child's ratio and group size apply. The rule says 2 hours a day; since June 11, 2026, state law (ESHB 2219) allows up to 2.5 hours, or 4 hours if 90 minutes of it covers staff meal and rest breaks.
- **Smaller ratio, larger group:** an infant group may have 9 children at 1:3, and a toddler group may have 15 at 1:5.
- **Kindergartners:** a child at least 5 and in kindergarten may be in the preschool or the school-age group if that suits the child and the parent agrees.
- DCYF has started rulemaking (WSR 26-10-098, May 2026) to amend this section for the new mixed-age time limits in ESHB 2219.

Source: WAC 110-300-0356(5) (effective August 1, 2019), read on November 24, 2026. This sheet is a summary, not legal advice: always check the current regulation and your licensing consultant.